Trials and Triumphs

An Autobiography

By REV. W. T. TARDY

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(Before he was stricken)

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WITH A FOREWORD BY

REV. GEORGE W. TRUETT, D.D.

EDITED BY

J. B. CRANFILL, LL.D.

MARSHALL, TEXAS

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To

"The Wonder Woman,"

MY BELOVED WIFE,

whose unselfish Love has cheered my weary hours and whose tender care has so often chased away my pain, this book is affectionately dedicated by

THE AUTHOR.

FOREWORD

By REV. GEORGE W. TRUETT, D.D.

It has not been my privilege to read the chapters of this book, for which I am writing this foreword, and yet I count it a privilege, even before reading the book, to give it my most cordial commendation, because of my personal knowledge of its nobly brilliant author, the Rev. William Thomas Tardy.

That prince of preachers and teachers, Dr. John A. Broadus, after an interview that he once had with the world-famed inventor, Mr. Thomas A. Edison, said, "I was doubly anxious to see Mr. Edison, because the man himself is always greater than anything he can say or do." Such saying may preeminently be applied to the author of this Autobiography. Brilliant and challenging and inspirational as its chapters will be to all who read them, their author was himself far greater than anything he ever said or did.

He has been an outstanding man from the early morning of his manhood. His life has been wide-reaching in its inspiration and helpfulness, even from the days of his youth. His range of reading was wide, and his opinions and convictions were always clearly and fearlessly expressed. Vast numbers eagerly awaited his utterances, whether from his pen or tongue, and were greatly profited by them. Both as a speaker and as a writer, he possessed extraordinary gifts. As a minister of the Gospel of Christ and as a citizen of the State, his brilliant powers were unreservedly dedicated to the good of his fellows and the glory of his Master.

His life and labors take on a still more challenging meaning when it is remembered that for years he was sorely afflicted, so much so that he had to dictate all his writings and to make all his addresses from an invalid's chair. The spell and blessing of his patriotic and Christian

messages, thus delivered, will long and consciously burn in the hearts of great audiences all over the land.

Through all his afflictions, his energy and optimism and courage and faith were undaunted, and his activities in behalf of every good cause grew in intensity until the very last hour of his earthly pilgrimage. During his last weeks and days the chapters of this book were dictated, his brilliant mind glowing at a white heat and his faith in Christ shining out with constantly increasing certitude and triumph, until his spirit left the wearied body to be at home with his Lord in the Father's House above. The story of the final, wonderful hours of the earthly life is told by his exceedingly helpful and devoted wife in a final chapter of this volume, which wife the honored husband characterized as "The Wonder Woman."

Very earnestly would I here express the hope that this book may have a vast circulation, and that speedily. This hope is voiced not only because the proceeds from the sale of this book will give practical aid to the brave widow and the fatherless children, but also because the book will undoubtedly carry a large blessing to all who may read it. It will cheer the suffering, encourage the struggling, enhearten the weary, challenge and inspire old and young alike to lives of maximum deeds and invincible spirit, and it will glorify Him whom the author so passionately loved and served, and it will go on doing these good things after the author, like David of old, has served his own generation by the will of God and fallen on sleep.

Pastor's Study,
First Baptist Church,
Dallas, Texas.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Even before I disposed of the Texas Baptist Book House to the Baptist Standard Publishing Co., I had been in correspondence with my beloved friend and brother, the author of this autobiography, concerning the publication of this work. He had not at that time completed it, nor indeed, as I learned afterwards, had he begun it; but it was on his heart for many months, suggested in part, as I believe, by my own autobiography, a copy of which I sent him soon after it was published and many copies of which he distributed among his friends. Finally, when his book was nearing completion, he wrote me again and this time more urgently concerning the early publication of the work. There was in his letter a note of appeal that I could not have resisted if I would, and would not have resisted if I could. Long ago I recognized W. T. Tardy as one of the brilliant men of Texas. He had few equals on the platform, even after his torn and twisted body was so afflicted that he could not stand as he spoke. He was a man of tireless energy, of remarkable brilliancy of mind, of earnest, affectionate, and enduring friendship, and of sincere and loving devotion to the Master. Many times I turned my hand to writing a tribute to him while yet he was with us, but like many another Christian task, well planned, I waited too long, and now the tribute I meant to pay him is but feebly expressed in the words here penned.

Those who have never been afflicted cannot sympathize with those who suffer. I have heard many a man with bright, well, strong eyes commiserate those whose eyes had failed; but even in the very flood-tide of their generous expressions, these dear friends were unable to enter into the sorrows of the blind, or of the man who, all his life long, has loved and lived in books and yet who is cut off from reading them. It is generous of the strong and well to voice expressions of sympathy for those who suffer

and are sad, but none of us can really enter into an affliction that we ourselves have never known. No juror understands the meaning of a sentence of imprisonment. It is easy for him to vote to send a man to prison for twenty-five, or twenty, or fifteen, or ten, or five years, but he cannot possibly measure the long drawn-out torture and suffering of the contemplated incarceration. I saw W. T. Tardy many times during his affliction, and I had seen him many other times during the period of his great and glowing health. I thought that I entered into his sufferings, but I know I never had fully entered into them until his last letter came to me, urging me to hurry with this manuscript and get it to the printers at once, adding, "I am weak, weak, weak!" Even then I hoped he would be spared until the book could be published, but on the very day that the manuscript was being mailed to the printers, he gently fell asleep and went on to be with Christ.

I have known many brave sufferers who battled against tremendous and seemingly overwhelming odds, but I never knew a braver one than W. T. Tardy. Even when his body was racked with pain, his wonderfully brilliant mind seemed to soar and cleave the skies. Never shall I forget the torrential eloquence that fell from his lips after the beginning of the great war, when he came to our own city and poured out his heart to us concerning the issues that had been thus so tragically precipitated. Despite his great affliction, he smiled his way happily along, cheering others as he went, and giving each and all whom he met words of encouragement and hope. He was a patriot to his heart's core and was glad to give his two sons that they might go to the scene of blood and carnage and, if need be, sacrifice their lives on the altar of liberty. In the last chapter of this volume he speaks tenderly of their return, but I know full well that he would have willingly given both to the cause he so dearly loved if their lives had been needed to save the world from the march and martyrdom of German tyranny.

I am happy in the thought that my promise to print this book brought cheer and gladness to his closing hours. His wife wrote me that when he had my letter telling him that I would attend to all the details of publishing the book,

finance it, and advance every penny of the money, he never worried any more. I was so anxious that he should see the completed volume, but that was not to be. And now, as I close these words, I lay my tribute of love and friendship upon his new-made grave, hoping and believing that the work he left behind will help and cheer countless thousands of others who have themselves known affliction, pain, and sorrow as did he.

J. B. CRANFILL.

REV. W. T. TARDY
(After he was stricken)

TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND ANCESTRY

I was born in southeastern Arkansas in June of the early seventies. That Arkansas was my native State is accidental, providential, or both. My father, a middle-aged country doctor and farmer, was treking from war-stricken and poverty-ridden Mississippi toward the salubrious climate of southwestern Texas. East of the Mississippi River in the Confederate States the fiercely contending battle forces had wrought unprecedented havoc. Property was entirely swept away. The absolute overthrow of the existing social state had dazed and benumbed the masterful whites. Carpet-bag and scalawag rule and consequent negro domination caused a continuous westward exodus of former slaveholders who could not endure the galling and humiliating conditions of the radically changed social order, nor could they readjust their industrial and economic ideas and activities with sufficient celerity to meet the exigencies of the new and baffling burdensome life thrust upon them. Therefore, the endless stream of westward-bound pilgrims. My parents had no sort of intention of making Arkansas their permanent home. Bandera County, Texas, was the destination; but the distance, the poverty of the pilgrims, and the travel-weariness caused them to strike tent and abide a while on the first hill this side the bottoms of the Delta. Deep stakes were never driven down, neither were the borders of the habitation enlarged. Temporariness was written over everything and the rolling plains of Texas billowed invitingly to every eye. There was nothing remarkable about my advent into the world, save that I was born in a rude and quickly constructed shanty that was called "The Soot House," from the fact that the wind blew the smoke against the walls and blackened them. Two

years later my brother, now an officer of distinction in the United States Navy, was born in a fairly respectable white-washed boxed house. The glaring contrast between our birth-places was often cause for quarrels of no little acerbity and many juvenile pugilistic encounters.

On my father's side I am of French descent. In a letter from Rev. Reuben Saillens, the great superintendent of Baptist work in France, he tells me that our name is thoroughly French, and that the family probably originated in Normandy. I have a pardonable pride in bearing the same name of the great writer whom the historian, Guizot, calls the Gallic literary genius of his time. My great-grandfather, Alexis Tardy, started the family in America. He reached these shores by a stroke of daring boyish intrepidity. The wanderlust was in his blood and at the age of twelve he secreted himself in a wine cask on a sailing vessel bound for America, and never showed himself to the officers or crew until the ship was three days out, when hunger drove him from his hiding place. Nothing then could be done with the adventurous youth but to allow him to finish the voyage. Philadelphia became his early home. There he married a Welsh girl, and himself became a cunning workman in silver and gold, and later settled in the island of Santo Domingo. He was residing and prospering here with a young family in this black spot of the West Indies when the negroes revolted against their masters and perpetrated the massacre that is now historic. My grandfather's slaves were kindly disposed to their master and his family, and they placed them safely upon boats bound for the States.

That revolution under the Southern Cross forced the migration of my forebears to the coast cities of Charleston, Mobile and New Orleans. To this day I have numbers of distant relatives in those cities. This progenitor of the American branch of our family, Alexis Tardy, was a Roman Catholic. My father's father was brought up as an altar boy and times without number bore the robe of the priest in the service of the mass. This ancestor, my grandfather, was a graduate of Jefferson Medical College at Philadelphia. In some way he settled at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and there married a wealthy planter's daughter, and himself became landlord and slave owner. The vitalest thing that touched his life here, and thru him the branch of the family

that sprang from him, was that his marriage brought him in contact with personal piety and New Testament religion. He found himself indissolubly bound up with Baptists of the most straightest sect. This association and the power of God did their perfect work and since that marriage, the Tardy strain that is removed a few hundred miles from the coast, has been logically and consistently Baptist or, at least, strongly evangelical and protestant.

My father, A. B. Tardy, the first child of his parents, was born in Tuscaloosa. He was instructed in the science of medicine by his cultured father, but by some strange lapse in fortune, or mistake in educational plans, he never attended college. Neither father nor son ever made any money out of his profession. They did the practice on their several plantations and for the neighbors who needed their ministrations, but they did not know how to charge nor how to collect. They gloried in the professional title of doctor and both were marvelously successful practitioners in the old-fashioned school of medicine. I remember very clearly that my father in the country, in Arkansas, was regarded as a pneumonia specialist. The rural folk said that he and his fly blisters were a dead shot against the dread plague of winter. Many is the time that I have carried from my mother fresh, cool, thick and delicious buttermilk to the emaciated, but convalescent pneumonia patients of my father. The children of the household used to say that my father practiced medicine for the good and glory of it, and made us work like galley slaves on the farm for a living.

Ours was a mixed family. My mother was my father's third wife. He was a middle-aged man and had grown children when I was born. Naturally this aggregation of dissimilar spirits and temperaments was not conducive to peace and piety in the home. The disruption of my father's home, the scattering of the children with the inevitable lack of discipline, and the lawlessness consequent upon war and reconstruction, made the place of stepmother an exceedingly hard and unenviable position. My mother was Miss Mary S. Vaughan, born near Demopolis, Alabama, on the Warrior River. Since, if strength is vouchsafed me, I purpose to devote a special chapter to her. I shall not here elaborate upon her history or character.

CHAPTER II

EARLY ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL COLOR

Drew County is in the southeastern corner of Arkansas, the second county from the Mississippi River. Collins was a small village named for General Benjamin Collins, whose wife was an aunt of my father. Sprawling over a lob-lolly pine plateau, just beyond where the bottom was separated from the hills by Cut Off Creek, a stream whose name was both suggestive and explanatory, there was no natural grandeur, beauty, nor attractiveness within miles of our home. The scenery was depressing rather than inspiring. The landscape had not a single noble feature. There were the pin oak ponds from which the country folk got young trees to set out in their yards and white dirt with which they made chimneys for their houses. A frame chimney made of this dirt worked into the constituency of mortar and kneaded into straw was an institution in those days and set the owner in a class far above his neighbors who had only "stick and dirt" chimneys. When the dirt and the straw were worked together into a mass about a foot long, tapering at both ends, the result was called a "cat," and the "cat" was thrown to the chimney builder, who wrapped it around the sticks of the wooden frame until there was a mass from the ground to the top. This then had white mud smeared over it inside and out. The chimneys were serviceable and, if well built, almost everlasting and not at all bad looking.

When I can first remember there was no cooking-stove or sewing-machine in our neighborhood. Our kitchen was a rather huge affair with dirt floor and big fireplace off in the yard a little distance from the house. This is the one building of the place, the appointments, uses, and looks of which are indelibly impressed upon me. What savory odors came from that big fireplace! And what mysteries did the frying pans, ovens, skillets, and pots hold! How the fire glowed and crackled under the big ovens and how live, bright, and hot were the coals from seasoned bark on the thick and heavy lids. This was all inter-

esting to children, especially the bark, for it was the unwritten law in every country home that the "chaps" should keep the kitchen supplied with bark—and not infrequently the troublesome questions of hungry children during the preparation of a meal were answered by cooks: "If you don't shet up, I'll break dis bark over your hed!" This outdoor kitchen was the social center of the place, especially at evening time. Here middle-aged and elderly women and negroes, who were still on good terms with the whites, gathered and gossiped. All the tales of superstition I know, I learned from the lips of newly emancipated negroes before the old kitchen fire after supper time. Hair-raising "cunjur" yarns and eye-widening and heart-stopping ghost stories were told again and again until all the little fellows trembled in delicious fright. I have sat by the hour enthralled by the weird tones and barbaric beliefs of the old "Mammies." I was afraid to hear them and loath to forego the thrill of the spell. Many a night I would not have gone alone the few steps back to the house for all the money in the world.

As the children grew older and progressed in cooking lore they could tell by the smell what food was in a utensil that had been removed from the fire. Quite often when the mother's or cook's back was turned, a trained-nosed and empty-stomached boy would slyly uncover the vessel and purloin the articles of food for which his mouth was watering. Thereby for me hangs a tale. One Saturday night my mother had been cooking tea cakes. A close watch had been kept on me and my every approach to the kitchen door had been detected and each time I was driven away empty-handed and clean-toothed. The odor of the hot sweet bread maddened me and when the cooking was done I skulked into the kitchen, but the cakes had been safely hidden and my search was in vain. At length I espied on the corner of the hearth the oven that had been used for baking the cakes. Cake odor came up from it. This was my chance. Nobody was around and my long waiting was to be rewarded as I devoured the last installment of the cakes that were left to cool. The oven lid had a kind of grayish tinge that should have warned even me, young as I was, had I not been so hungry and in such a hurry. I seized the handle of the lid with my bare fingers, holding it with such nervous tightness that I

could not immediately turn the thing loose. My hand was terribly burned and right there, for the time being, I lost my appetite for cakes. I went into the yard, screaming with pain and ran upon my grandfather, who happened to be visiting us that day. Instead of sympathizing with me in my torture, the little gray-haired Frenchman actually slapped me. This is the last vivid recollection I have of the old kitchen, but it is unforgettable, as it was literally burned into me.

The character of population here was what might be expected from penniless refugees and native squatters in a remote corner of a rather new and much maligned State. There were, indeed, some worthy people who were neighborood assets and state builders, but a large proportion of the settlers were of an inferior type. There were many dregs and much scum. The nondescript or nonclassifiable white man was much in evidence. He was hard to rightly appraise. He did not descend from slave owners nor from the independent mountaineer of the South. Probably the negroes were right when they described this class as just "pore white trash." The supreme term of opprobrium of the blacks for the whites was "white buceras." There was, too, a rather consequential infusion of the criminal element. This is not surprising when the state of the country is taken into account, and when a survey is made of this backward section of the land. The civil war had ended, leaving vast outlying districts poor, bitter, and discontented. For years discipline in the home and in the government had been sadly relaxed. The negro problem was acute. The solvent freedmen vaunted their unaccustomed independence. The lower the white man, the more he resented the pretensions of the black man. Fear of the latter hovered as a lowering cloud over every neighborhood and darkened the door of every home. Summary and merciless vengeance was reaped upon the offending negro. What Carlyle calls the cruelty of fear obsessed the helpless whites. The carpet-bagger and political degenerates were in the saddle. Our country was represented in the legislature by the Honorable (?) Curl Trotter, an illiterate black, and our senatorial district had its interest looked after at Little Rock by Honorable (?) Henry Brooks, a ginger cake negro of rather harmless proclivities. When I knew these two retired statesmen, they were janitors in the Court House at Monticello.

The first time I ever stepped into the glistening temple of justice at Pine Bluff, a large, ebony-hued, former slave was sitting at the desk as district clerk. Of course, a white deputy was furnishing the brains and doing the work. There was thruout our country a kind of bastard Ku Klux organization, holding on and functioning long after General Forrest had disbanded the knights of the invisible empire. This band successfully suppressed the outrages of the lawless blacks, while it engendered and fostered a defiant and lawless spirit among the ignorant and irresponsible whites.

When the negroes had been subdued, the subduers fought among themselves. Cutting affrays and shooting scrapes were of common occurrence. The grip of justice in the courts was pretty tight and the usual recourse for a poor man after committing a crime was to flee the country. For some days the hunted fugitive would hide out in the cane brakes of the bottoms or secrete himself in the impenetrable thickets surrounding the cabin of some friends until the peace officers tired of the search, then on a horse not well-known to the public, he would make his get-away thru Louisiana on to Texas. More than once have I seen my relatives and near neighbors carry a supper of venison steak and bread and potatoes and coffee after dark down to the fastnesses of Cut-off Creek. The children gazed upon this procedure with undisguised wonder. Nobody dared to tell us the purposes of these nocturnal expeditions. Natural intuition and the sharpened faculties of childhood's inquisitive mind soon divined the truth. I do not think that I ever had a pony given me by my father, or that I had raised from a colt, that did not mysteriously disappear. The animal was sold or loaned to some poor Cain who was fleeing the scene of his misdeeds.

Whiskey was an unmitigated evil. Everywhere the bowl went round and the bottle was a boon companion. The liquor jug, plugged with a corn cob stopper, was under the bed of the master of every house. Eggnogs were the established custom. The milder form of toddies was of constant indulgence. I have seen whole households with all the guests, both men and women and children, tipsy to silliness from too freely imbibing the thick and strong eggnog from the capacious bowl. The grocery stores in the little towns sold whiskey in addition to

that sold by the saloons. The medical fraternity at that time regarded alcohol as a food and a stimulant. It was thought to be good when the winter was too cold and when the summer was too hot—a set off for the chill of the former, and a stimulant for the ennui of the latter. Our community did not know that there was any poor whiskey. The universal opinion was that of the Irishman—it is all good and better.

The amusements were house-raisings and log-rollings for the mature men and women and parties or dances in the winter for the young people. The house-raisings and log-rollings were of crying necessity, and the social value of the gatherings was not to be despised. But the good of the country fandangoes was always a debatable question with the best arguments and weight of evidence against them. At these entertainments the girls flirted flagrantly and the men grew jealous, drank inordinately, fought and shot. Sometimes tragedies unspeakable were enacted at these mid-winter dances. With sufficient reason and on ample grounds the minority of careful parents and good church people fought the dances to the bitter end. The little old town three-quarters of a mile from our house was a place of hilarity and dissipation. Bloody encounters were a weekly occurrence. Yelling, drunken men came on horseback and in wagons by our house every day. Their insane whooping and distorted visages made the blood curdle in my frightened little body. I well remember standing on the roadside and watching a man pass by whose scalp was laid open on one side of his head, the freely flowing blood made the left side of his face a lurid red. He saw me not, but emitted one drunken whoop after another as he soddenly sat his patient horse. The sordidness of the whole environment was a heart depressant to a growing child. My impressionable spirit was wounded to the center and my sensitive soul was seared.

A truly high character never came into my life nor did a great man or woman cross my path from the outside up to my eighth year when we moved from the place of my birth. All of our acquaintances and visitors were ordinary or below. I do not remember experiencing an inspirational hour, nor was I ever helped in the urge of a great expectancy, or the surge of high endeavor. The social atmosphere was murky in the extreme and sordid beyond belief. In the terrible times thru

which we were going the inner light had failed and there was no vision and the people perished. No stalwart preacher of prophetic voice and awesome mien called the people to repentance or charged the well-fortressed bulwarks of hell. We were in the spiritual eddies and moral back-waters of civilization. We had all the disadvantages of the pioneers, dissociated from the heroism of real adventure. The oppressiveness of the degeneracy of those early years weighs heavily upon me to this day. Loftiness of soul, singleness of purpose, and devoutness of spirit were alien to my childhood. Often my father plowed with two pistols buckled around him, and when he fared forth on his steed he was a riding arsenal. These arms were not carried to meet bearded Huns, nor to slay avowed and brave enemies, but for protection against sinister and cowardly foes in the neighborhood of his domicile. The ambushed enemy might lurk in any fence corner, or under the first dense copse. This made life a suffocating agony rather than a joyous experience. Idealistic impulses were stifled and altruistic aspirations were turned into cinders. It is a marvel of grace that any of us lived thru it, and a tribute to the tears and prayers and faith of our mother that the children finally entered upon careers of usefulness and walked in paths of peace. How these miracles were wrought will be told in chapters that follow.

CHAPTER III

OBSERVATIONS AND INNER EXPERIENCES OF A LITTLE BOY

Nothing can escape the eager vision of a normal and inquisitive child. He is all eyes and ears for everything that is new, and for him all things are new. The commonplace is lifted to the dignity of romance. He sees things in the delightful freshness of a new acquaintance, and memories are imperishable. Mind itself must be destroyed utterly before early impressions can be obliterated. Who can fathom the abysmal wonders of the mind of a child, and who can read the riddle of inquiry and the mysterious depth and the mischievous twinkle of the eye of a boy? Except for this appetite and his bodily pains, a child up to eight or nine years transcends himself and his life is an overleaping, outreaching process. When further advanced in years there is an intensely selfish and self-centered period that gives the gravest concern to parents and teachers as to his final destiny. Just at this time I was entering upon that childhood era that made investigation a perennial adventure. The world of men and women, animals and things, opened new vistas every hour and richly rewarded every exercise of body and effort of mind. I was the eldest living child of my mother. By the time I was eight years old there were five boys in the family. Two years spaced the ages between each one. I clearly remember when my third, fourth and fifth brothers were born. There were always books and papers in the house and my parents were great readers. I do not know when I learned my letters nor at the exact age I learned to read, but I do know that McGuffey's fourth reader was a present to me when I was a very little fellow.

My father was a voluble man. In private conversation he was one of the most fluent talkers I have ever known. He was the possessor of a wonderful assortment of uncoördinated, general information. He could sit on the porch in summer, or by

the fireside in winter and talk to any willing auditor all day or all night; meantime, incessantly smoking his pipe, always using a fine brand of "deer tongue" tobacco. But my father was painfully timid in public. He never made a speech in his life. I have seen him second a motion at a conference in a Baptist church, and in doing so he always ducked his head and lowered his voice. It took me years to catch the blessing that he offered at the table, with such embarrassment and rapidity did he repeat it.

As the oldest child of the younger set, I was forced into outdoor activities very early. When I learned to ride horseback is beyond my ken. I was sent upon errands on my pony long before I was able to mount him unaided by any means known even to self-reliant country people. Three near-horseback tragedies I vividly recall. One time coming from the mill with a sack of ground corn, I essayed to go thru a small gate near the house, rather than ride around and open the big barn-like gate. The two ends of the sack of meal caught against the opposite gate post and the sack and I were left upon the ground with me fortunately on top as the pony squeezed on thru. Another time I came upon my horse Tom in a long lope to the watering pool. The animal stopped suddenly at the edge of the water and I went over his head into the middle of the cool liquid. Somebody near by rescued me, and I was none the worse except for a horrid scare and wet clothes. Later I was racing this horse up the road a mile or two from home when he stumbled and fell, throwing me out on the roadside, where I lay limp with the breath knocked out of me. Had not a passing friend of the family picked me up and shaken me to life again, these lines would never have been written.

About this time I became a shepherd boy. My father purchased various small detachments of sheep and undertook to combine them into a flock, of which I had the care. Here I learned the sheep nature down to the ground. I have no illusions about that seemingly mild-mannered brute. My hard novitiate as a shepherd has helped me greatly in the interpretation of many Scriptures that speak of the saints as the sheep of His pasture. I do not think the Lord ever put breath in a more vexatious and obdurate grazing animal than this same meek and mild-mannered sheep. It was my business to drive

the flock to the fields in the morning and to bring them home and safely house them in the sheep-cote at night. Things went merrily enough so long as the hungry beasts were devouring the luscious grass. But so soon as their maws were filled, some old bellwether would bleat out his commands and the sheep that obeyed his voice would follow at his tail as he made a break thru the woods toward the home of his former master. That first defection was a signal for general herd-anarchy. Universal stampede followed and there was a dispersion that left the pasture bare and left me distracted. I hallooed dolorously, abused my horse terrifically, called for help piteously, and usually finished the day worn, thorn-scratched and chagrined over my failure to live up to the arduous task assigned me. When I did bring home the remnant of the flock and attempt to drive them over the stile into the place of secure refuge for the night, some old ram, possessed of more evil spirits than were ever cast out of Mary Magdalene, would whirl around on the topmost step of the stile and go bounding away into outer darkness, followed by all the sheep he could control. This, when I was dead tired and when I was more afraid of the night myself than I was of the menacing threats or sure anger of my father. The sequel always came the day thereafter. The rebellious sheep were found dead, slain by ravenous wolves or bands of marauding dogs. Then we had to go out and pull the wool by hand from the stiff and swollen bodies of the dead sheep. I still adhere to the opinion formed then, that that is a job no boy ought to be required to do. The obstreperous animals tried our souls in every conceivable way. They would go into the brier patches and lose their wool on the sharpened ends of fence rails.

In that day wolves were the highwaymen of the dark. Their doleful and blood-thirsty howls made the night hideous. Packs would come as near to the house as they dared and howl until my father would go out on the porch and shout or fire a shot gun to frighten them away. At such times I shivered in bed with deadly fear and often have I stuffed the cover in my ears to keep from hearing the split-tongued and blood-throated yelping of the wild dogs of the forest. Not much over a hundred yards down the public road below our house I once saw a wolf in broad daylight cross the highway before me.

There is, however, a better side to the sheep than the one above delineated. His flesh, when flat, makes delicious mutton, which is a food fit for kings. Then the clip of his wool keeps the sons of men from freezing. Shearing time was a great occasion on the farm. The sheep was caught and laid upon a table and the fleece was cut very near the skin, beginning at the tail of the animal and folded back in great rolls toward the head. I have watched the eyes of the patient animals as they were being robbed of the coats of their backs and I have seen them even not wince when their tender skin was cut again and again. And to this day the mute submissiveness of that indispensable beast brings to my mind the passage, "Like a lamb dumb before her shearers, He opened not His mouth." The wool was washed and dried and some of it was carried to the market and sold. The remainder was used for family necessities. I did not come up in the days when cloth was made in the home. But all stockings, socks and gloves and wristbands used by the household were manufactured there by hand. After washing and drying, the wool was carded into rolls; these were spun into thread and the thread was knitted into garments. My mother used to carve innumerable rolls and place them in billowy piles in the corner of the room.

Then the spining-wheel was brought into requisition. This piece of mechanism was a wonder to the children. A large wheel axled upon a staff that stood upright from a pony-frame that sprawled its chubby legs on the floor, was belted by a cord to the spindle in front. The fluffy end of a soft roll of wool was placed against the shining point of the steel spindle, the big wheel began to turn, and its revolution made the spindle revolve with a dizzy *zune*. Soon the thread would cover the spindle like a comb. This was called a broach. It was rolled into a ball and the knitting began. I have beguiled the tedious hours of many a long winter night, watching the flash and listening to the click of the needles in my mother's hand. The fascination of seeing the stocking lengthen under the deft fingers of an expert knitter was absorbing enough to drive the sandman from childhood's eyes. The only relic of my early home that I would care to have is my mother's old spinning wheel, which has long since gone the way of all the earth.

Notwithstanding the appeal that the sentient and the obvious

always made to me, I was ever an introspective child. Pain and death always loomed in terror before me. We lived in what is known as a sickly community. The disease called malaria made no exceptions in its ravages. It might be said that I was brought up on chills and fevers, pills, quinine and sassafras tea. Asafoetida, too, had its place in the pharmacopoeia of the day. It was an epoch of heavy medicine. The theory seemed to be to give the patient quantity enough to kill the disease. I thought I was a pretty strong boy when I was able to lift my father's saddle bags clear of the ground. I have seen him make pills on the back of a great dinner plate and then erect them into a gigantic pyramid that was sickeningly repulsive to the last degree. Frequently the directions were: Take one of these three times a day for thirty days. In these early years I had every disease except mumps and measles, which were reserved to vex my manhood and test my endurance after I became the father of a family. Shivering with ague and burning with fevers were the order of the day from early spring till late fall.

A tragic and premature death came near being my portion from an accidental and too liberal dose of morphine when I was too young to remember my age. But the memory of the experience itself is as vivid as if it had happened yesterday. The medicine had been intended for my mother and by some irresponsible party had been given to me. The mistake was discovered in time for remedial means to be applied. For me that was a night of nights. By harsh treatment I was partially awakened. Then the long vigil and doubtful fight against death began. I was spanked, roughly shaken, flagellated, drenched with coffee and emetics, rolled and stormed at, and when wakefulness seemed to be attained, limp and stupid, I was carried in the arms of a half-uncle until far in the gray of the early morning. I shall never cease to be grateful to this relative for his unremitting toil in keeping alive the spark of life within me. The next morning when the damps of death were just departing from my brow, and the final weakness of physical exhaustion sat upon me, I piteously asked this uncle why I had been so maltreated and had not been allowed sleep the night before. His answer was: "Had we not resorted to the heroic measures that were seemingly so cruel to you, you would be

on your way to the graveyard now." For a quarter of a century I have used this illustration about myself to defend the persistency of earnest Christians who were troubling chloroform sinners.

I can never forget the first death I had the sorrow of witnessing. It was the demise of a grown young man, a third cousin of mine. I do not know how I came to be there since the place was two or three miles from our house, and I was, indeed, very small. How I went or returned is a blank to me. I found myself in the room of dissolution, chained by my first view of the agony of the age-long tragedy. The man was propped up on pillows and a grayish cast overspread his face. The ashen hue was around his lips. He was making inarticulate sounds and to me he seemed to be saying, "Mamma, Mamma." At the bed-railing sat his sweet, heart-broken and distracted mother, wringing her hands and helplessly wailing, "Oh, Buddie, Buddie, Buddie." Not until the Son of Man shall come in glory and forever abolish death and wipe all tears from the eyes of weeping women, will that picture of unspeakable woe fade from my memory.

Later the stepfather of that young man was killed by a falling limb. I remember his bent form in the coffin. I have always hated coffins. I dislike the name and abhor the shape. Casket sounds better and it looks better. The pointed foot and head and the distended sides of the old-fashioned coffin filled me with terror. In the little village near us a first cousin of my father was the coffinmaker. I have seen him steam the sides and bend the planks and nail them to the ends. I have heard the rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat of the small hammer as the outside cloth was nailed on and as the inner trimmings were placed. It was all gruesome to me in the extreme, and I used to often wonder if mortality could not be abolished.

Be it remembered that in these parts religion was not very vital and the doctrine of the resurrection was not so forcefully preached as to offset the lugubrious thoughts that crowded infantile minds. I was the victim of all sorts of disquieting obsessions. Gypsy stories undid me. I had seen bands of these nomads passing on the road and had surreptitiously spied upon their camps. More than once did I dream that I was captured by the gypsies and carried far, far away. I was afflicted with

what is known as nightmares, and in my paroxysm I thought the clouds were coming down upon me and were suffocating me. When discovered, I would be standing up in bed, trying to climb the walls in a futile effort to pierce the asphyxiating clouds and reach the pure air beyond. When awakened I would be in a tub of warm water by which means my father and mother were restoring my physical equilibrium and establishing the balance of circulation. These doleful recitals are the true narratives of the inner feelings of a small boy who cannot forget.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNIVERSITY OF HARD KNOCKS—MOVING

Since it was predestined that my father would never get to Texas, but would spend his life and find his grave in Arkansas, he was seized with a mania for short moving. From the time I was eight years old until the time of his death, he was always on the jump. He had every personal excuse for his migrations, and he defended sacrificial surrender of his holdings with great fluency. He urged the matter of health for his family, cheaper lands, broader range for his stock and a thousand other specious arguments, justified his determination, answered the protests of his family, and overawed all opposition. Strangely enough each new move of the family carried us further from the centers of population, culture and power. The impression made upon the children was that they were to be hidden in the obscurity of the backwoods.

At this time we moved eight miles farther south down toward the Louisiana line. The place-name of our objective was Troy. There was plenty of dignity in the name and the historical association sufficiently high-sounding to satisfy the antiquarian and to please the modern. But four years of residence there did not reveal even a postoffice. There was an old two-story church and Masonic hall with an old field on one side of it and a graveyard on the other. The building was a general neighborhood utility structure. School, justice courts, singing classes and preaching were all conducted there. We lived on a little hill beyond this building and the justice of the peace, the quaintest character imaginable, resided across the road in front of us. The nervous proclivities of my father were shown in that he demolished the farmhouse the very first year and moved it down the road to another part of the estate. Here I came right up against the exactions of real life. Making a living was the important thing. My father was now an elderly man with

five small boys, and we had to wring a subsistence from the ground on a newly settled place in a remote community.

Hard, unrelenting, and for the most part unremunerating toil was the portion of us all. Misfortune followed us at every turn. Some sneaking enemy stole the best horse from our stable and tied him out in the woods until starvation caused his death. My father rigged up a loaded shotgun and set it with both hammers cocked at the stable door, but that was after the horse was gone. To this day I marvel that some of us were not killed from the discharge of the gun set for the thief as we went out to feed in the early hours.

I can never forget the unrelieved agony of continuous labor. Doubtless some work is good for children, but everlasting work is a measureless curse. We cleared land, cut sprouts, grubbed, hoed and plowed, and harvested early and late. This rigorous regime of unremitting toil was a weariness to the flesh. It stunted the body, dwarfed the mind, and embittered the soul. One year we made a crop with a blind pony and a yoke of oxen. During the rush part of the work season we had no meat. Every other day I walked two miles for some buttermilk and clabber, with which beverage we slaked our table thirst and washed down our frugal fare. That was the year that cotton seed products came into vogue as a cooking oil. The refining process had not been fully developed, and the odor from boiling cotton seed oil at the kitchen was not unlike the smell of rotting seed at the old-fashioned gin. By shutting your eyes and holding your breath you could eat the potatoes and other vegetables cooked in this oil with a fair relish if you were very hungry.

Many is the time that my hands have cramped to the hoe handle, and I had to rake them off on a stump in the field or against the protruding corners of a rail fence. Most of the land was rough and new ground. We plowed with a home-made plow stock, equipped with bull tongue and colter. When the colter cut a great root, both ends of the liberated underground runner did business against the unprotected legs of the barefoot plow-boy. There is to this day not a speck of skin on either one of my shins that was born there. When I now pass a country boy plowing in a field, my hand involuntarily goes to my side because the rough old plow-handle used to bruise and almost fracture my ribs.

Coming from the field dead tired after the sun had set, we ate what supper was awaiting us, then went to the back porch to wash our feet in the old-fashioned wooden foot-tub. The process of bathing was simple if mother was not watching. One foot was put in the cold water and gently rubbed with the other foot. Then the action was reversed. This over, we dragged our tired bodies to bed, where the night of rest was far too short for nature to restore the ravages of the preceding day's toil. The sogginess of a little body prodded to exhaustion and the effects of the toxic poison of overwork, prevented me from ever knowing the joys of normal slumber. I never even knew the exact time when I went to bed. I was unconscious when I hit the couch and always the next thing was father's voice calling me to go and feed the horses. This call came at an uncomfortably early hour. It was the business of my brother next to me to arise at the same time and cut the day's supply of stove wood. The wood was chopped from dry and gnarled old fence rails. Since the axe was uniformly dull the year around, the wood-cutting operation was no small task for a sleepy, hungry lad hardly big enough to raise the axe above his head. During the four years we lived at Troy I experienced every imaginable country vicissitude.

One winter and spring we had no variety of meat, but lived upon bread and pickled beef. The beef was cut into strips and put into barrels of boiled brine, where it kept well and would have been palatable enough had the diet not been so dreadfully monotonous. To this day the term pickled beef causes my stomach to revolt. This was also the era of cornbread. The move and the purchase of a new place had left the family fortunes flat. It was cornbread for breakfast, for dinner and for supper. Often have I said that we only had biscuits on Sunday morning for breakfast, or when the preacher came, and even then the children were allowed but one apiece. Sometimes we had venison steak or squirrels. At these meals it was a great privilege to be allowed "to sop the frying pan." Here the crumbly bread absorbed the rich residue of the gravy left in the cooking vessel. Often a baked sweet potato was used instead of bread, and not infrequently there was a quarrel rising to blows between the two boys who were "sopping the skillet" because one quicker or hungrier than the other would shove

his potato over the middle of the gravy line and thus impinge upon the rights of his brother.

Up to this time my brother and I had never had a store-bought suit of clothes. Our winter outside wear was usually made by our mother out of gray jeans. This was a warm, serviceable cloth. The suit consisted of pants and jacket, both fitted as tightly as they well might. Next to the skin we wore a one-piece garment made of woolen linsey. That article of apparel to me was one long drawn-out torture. The prickly ends of the threads irritated my skin and aroused in me such an abhorrence for flannel or woolen underwear that from the day that I began to purchase my own clothes I have worn nothing but cotton.

The shoes and boots sold us by the furnishing stores added greatly to our discomfort. The shoes were heavy, rough brogans, and the boots usually so drew on the foot that they had to be pulled off at night with a bootjack, and we never had any too many even of these. One pair to the person for the year was the rule. And perchance, if fortune favored, and the winters were long, there might be two pairs. Much has been written about the happiness and glory of the barefoot boy, but the poets and rhapsodists knew nothing of the terrors of cold and bleeding feet. For years I walked on the heel of one foot and on the toe of the other foot. Stone bruises, nailless toes, and lacerated foot bottoms were the concomitants of country conditions as they then were.

Sometimes the larger boys of the family earned a little extra money by hiring out to the neighbors when up with the work at home. In the summer we would hoe corn or chop cotton at the wage of fifty cents a day, and in the fall pick cotton at the prevailing rate per hundred pounds. When picking cotton out, frequently I have left home so early that my breakfast was a cold baked sweet potato, eaten on the way to the cotton patch. In this way my brother and I earned our first manufactured coat and shirts. The two coats cost seven dollars, and the shirts, with detachable turned down collar, cost seventy-five cents each. The first Sunday we went to church in these new togs we circulated thru the crowd to see if any of the neighbors were so well dressed as we. We met behind the church before entering the house and with great satisfaction reported to each

other that we were by far the best-dressed boys on the ground.

School facilities were pitifully meagre and the standards were close down to the ground. The term was in the heat of mid-summer and lasted from two to three months according to the funds. The instruction was in keeping with the equipment and that was the last limit of crudity. Teachers were not employed so much because of their ability to teach as of their pecuniary need. One time a good woman whose husband was not a very successful farmer was given the school and when another woman teacher was thought to be not quite satisfactory her husband was employed. Lest I be unjust, let me say that while living at Troy, we did have two teachers from a distance, a man and a woman, whose impress is still upon me. I register my gratitude to God for the devotion and piety of the good woman, a devout Episcopalian, who led us in the way of reverence and prayer.

In this neighborhood I entered the riotous age and tumultuous period of youth. Thoughts were tumbling over each other in my head and my heart was burning for I know not what. I was making excursions thru books and papers out into the great world of learning and adventure. One day I would want to be a foreign missionary and the next a western cowboy or a mountain highwayman, so complex are the moods and so contradictory the convictions of adolescence.

Then, too, I thought myself fearfully abused and woefully unappreciated. My parents and the neighbors seemed to wantonly underrate my abilities. It was hard to find anyone to whom I could talk and harder still would it have been for me to have adequately expressed myself. Occasionally I was the victim of the most depressing moroseness. Rebellious thoughts were bursting my little heart and in it all I was pathetically alone, for my companions were too stupid to fathom my mental distresses and my loved ones were too distraught with family cares to comfort or understand. A desire to know, to be, and to do was stirring within me and the religious impulse was struggling for expression and satisfaction. I did not know how to attain the first and there was no living soul to guide me in the development of the latter. There was at least one good preacher who came our way in these years. He was Rev. R. C. Stuart, who tho stricken in years, farmed for a living and

preached as opportunity offered for the edification of the saints and the salvation of sinners. He was a mild, dear man whose very presence was a benediction and whose tones could soothe my turbulent spirit.

That was a day and an environment which thought not seriously upon the worth of a child. He was too often cuffed, neglected, and toughened. Debasing associates and brutalizing companions left their ineffaceable marks upon all the boys of our neighborhood. The tragedy of it is unspeakable. Then there was no adequate offset to this tide of evil. The opposing forces of righteousness were not intelligently aggressive, neither were they zealous nor compactly organized. The growing boys were sucked down in the whirlpool or they floated in the eddies or climbed up the slippery banks as best they could.

At this time I was beset by every imaginable temptation and completely encircled by every form of sin. Despite it all the voice within me was never dumb and I was continuously grasping for that that evaded me. It now seems that it would have been the easiest thing in the world for a devout spirit to have led me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake, but no pilot of the soul touched my life. A visiting preacher's hand, laid upon my head, would set aquivering every nerve in my being, and many is the time that I tremblingly expected the ministerial guest to speak to me intimate words of soul instruction, but it was never done. I suffered on and groped my way. Oh, the pathos of the ignorance of grown people concerning the needs of a little child! And too often the consequences are tragic beyond repair. Kinsmen and hired men have times without number told me when I was a little miserable tow-headed boy that I was then having the happy time of my life. While I did not dare tell them so, I knew their words and theories were false and the long years have confirmed me in this opinion.

CHAPTER V

AMBITIONS AND EDUCATIONAL LIMITATIONS

Just as I passed my twelfth year we moved again. This time, however, we migrated back toward the center of the county within six miles of Monticello. Tho much nearer the county site than we had ever been before, the neighborhood was really the most backward community in which we had ever lived. The settlement was strung along Sand Creek between two public roads. Whatever of highway traffic there was did not touch us, and when we started to town or to church or to school we had to go about two miles before we struck the big road. Our location was such that by an effort we could reach the capital of the county in an hour or two, yet the cross-section position of the farm effectually isolated us. In this new place we first lived in a three-room log house, but there was a double hall and each room had a chimney, and as I recall living conditions were comfortable and exceedingly pleasant. About three years later we built a splendid, large boxed house on a rather favorable site, and this new residence with other farm improvements gave us a commanding position in the neighborhood. The land was good and the wood and water and range were abundant. The pride of our possession was a strip of bottom, lying on both sides of the creek that ran thru the field. We had in cultivation about twelve acres of this rich alluvial silt and whatever happened to the rest of the farm, there was always a satisfactory yield from the bottom field.

I was now developing into a strong and vigorous boy-farmer. But I had ideas. Never for a moment since I could think had I contemplated tilling the soil as my life work. The periodicals that came to our table from the time I was born and the talk of my father and mother around the fireside had fired me with an ambition to transcend my birth conditions. Some of the papers that came to our home were Vickery's Fireside Visitor of Augusta, Maine, Home and Farm, Courier Journal, The Arkansas Gazette, and The Arkansas Baptist.

Later we got both Memphis and New Orleans papers. At Troy we were so far from a post office that mail was very irregular and its reception quite uncertain. For ten days or two weeks one fall my brother and I stood on the roadside, asking passers-by who had been elected president. Our papers had not come and there were no telephones, and even national election news had to be carried to us by word of mouth.

While the country districts of our county were lamentably lacking in all the graces of culture, the town of Monticello had always been an educational center. There were noted teachers, intelligent doctors, acceptable preachers, and cultured women who created the spirit and molded the thought of the place. For years Monticello had the honor of being the home of the congressman at large, Col. W. F. Slemmons, who in his palmy days was said to be the handsomest man in the House of Representatives. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction did an enduring work, and laid the foundation work for his fame and fortune, in his own private school at Monticello before he was called to Little Rock to give the mature wisdom of many years to the work of developing the school system of the State. The names of all these outstanding ones were familiar to us from our earliest remembrances because of the insistent determination of our mother that some day her children would be placed under the tuition of these noted men.

Our last move brought us nearer the seats of the mighty and that was sufficient compensation to the ardent boys for the labor involved in improving another place. By some means the country trustees in our district refused to allow the teacher to carry the pupils beyond what would now be called the sixth grade. I wanted to study Latin and Algebra. Fortunately we were blessed in having two teachers, one after the other, both of whom were highly educated elderly men. Our parents obviated the difficulty imposed by the school authorities by boarding the teachers in return for extra tutoring in the higher branches given to my brother and me. This work was done at home before and after school hours.

The upward struggle was difficult because the downward tug was hard. Money was scarce and the products of the farm were cheap. I think a little over eight cents per pound is the highest price we ever got for cotton. At times I was well nigh

desperate as I thought I saw my youth slipping away from me with nothing to show for it. It seemed that the past had all been wasted and at times it looked as though every door of hope was shut in my face. My father was an irascible man fast growing old. He had brought up one family and the burden of a second brood in the evening of life was too much for him. Had my mother not been young and flamingly ambitious for her boys, sad indeed would have been our plight.

There were three educational agencies that made rather large contributions to my mental development just at this period. These were the Bible readings conducted by my mother in the home, the political discussions in campaign years, and the embryonic debating society in the dimly lighted school house. A fourth factor, the annual revival meetings, might be credited with awakening spiritual impulses and arousing soul action. Permanent perennial Sunday Schools were unknown. Only a few months in the spring and summer could any neighborhood in which we ever lived maintain a Bible school at the church or school-house. Except for the social joys and the uplift of the congregation our home did not suffer serious deprivation because of the lack of the public teaching of the Bible. The Word of God was read and the helps were studied every Sunday in my mother's room. The children as they grew old enough read verses by turn. It took much firmness on the part of my mother to force or cajole or persuade unruly boys to gather around her chair and read chapter after chapter of the Word of God, when field and wood and sunshine and play were calling. To this day the value of that Bible reading practice is manifest in every child that persisted in the exercise. Whatever mastery of pure English and whatever joys we find in the glorious writings of the Elizabethans are undoubtedly attributable to the Sunday Bible reading drill in our country home.

The political campaign was in that day a crusade of lofty ideals and great dignity. Even candidates for county offices were nearly always men of superior ability and culture far above the ordinary. The clash of mind on the stump and the display of forensic eloquence were intellectual marvels to the hungry-minded boys of the country side. The moral elevation of the speeches and the nobleness of the diction were infinitely

above anything I have heard in the last decade. Men who could not speak did not attempt to speak. The candidates were largely gentlemen of the old southern school and there was a hint of knightliness of the past and in the voice of the orators was the haunting note of the fast vanishing race of men whose genius for statesmanship made their supremacy upon the forum unassailable.

The high day of my political foregathering was when I heard in the courthouse the Congressional candidates. That is my red-letter experience. Our county had a candidate and there were three others. I remember them all and could now repeat large portions of the speeches. I walked out of that courthouse determined to go to Congress. I got the map and laid out my district. I fell upon the law as my chosen profession, made some tentative plans with jurists to read law in their offices, secured an appointment from the county judge to the State University. I read feverishly every book about great men that I could lay my hands on. The newspapers were devoured in a night by the light of a pine-knot fire. Every man prominent in public life of county, state, or nation was known to me thru the printed columns. The high tariff and low tariff advocates were familiars of mine. Frank Hurd of Ohio, Springer and Morrison of Illinois, Bynum and Voorhees of Indiana, Carlisle of Kentucky, Garland of Arkansas, Lamar of Mississippi, were the great democratic luminaries in whose light I walked and whose doctrines I accepted. On the other side was Blaine, the plumed knight of Maine, Hawley of Connecticut, Sherman and Hoar, Conkling, Logan, and Blair of New Hampshire, who was eternally addressing the Senate on his education bill. Any day I would gladly have gone on my hands and knees any possible distance to see and hear a great man. One cold spring night I sat up till after eleven o'clock around the fire, listening to the informing and sparkling talk of a Pennsylvania tramp, whom I persuaded my father to take in for the night. This run-down bum discoursed volubly upon men, from Lincoln to Governor Curtin. So voracious was my appetite for public news that every chance visitor was called upon to pay a heavy tax for the hospitality extended him.

The debating society was a crude, ill-conducted and poorly attended affair, but it furnished a few of us the opportunity we

sought. The first question ever discussed was the relative merits of Washington and Columbus in defending and discovering America. I had the affirmative side and after listening to the stammering arguments, the judge very promptly rendered the decision in favor of my opponent. That was a crushing blow and the sting of the defeat is felt by me to this hour. The debating society's life was short, but it served its purpose and gave at least one of its participants a start upon his life's career.

The protracted meetings of that time were probably more orderly as to the conduct of the crowds than they were a few years previously or have been since. The preaching was not of the highest order, but it was not bad. The sing-song intoning minister was before my time. The preaching I heard was superlatively Biblical and earnest to the point of boiling blood. The seeking note was prominent in all the sermons and the prophet did not cease to warn his hearers day and night. The horizon of most of our ministers was not very broad, but their very narrowness made them mighty. Their concentrated convictions forged a terrible bolt which they launched against sin with deadly effect. I have seen whole audiences mightily swayed and entire platoons of strong men crowd the front benches and piteously cry for mercy. Sometimes the rough building would seem to rock as it was filled with the glory of God under the power of the preached word as proclaimed by a rugged and uncompromising son of the soil. The singing was old-fashioned, earnest, devotional, and weird. The music of the old hymns would break the heart of stone and start tears from every eye.

The history of my own spiritual exercise and the story of my torn soul will be recorded in the chapter devoted to my conversion and call to the ministry.

Since there was no possible hope of advancement in the country school, I was now determined to leave the roof-tree for larger training. It was absolutely out of the question to expect my parents to pay board and tuition for me in town. The financial condition of the family made the idea unthinkable and of course I had no money and there was no way for me to immediately earn a sum large enough to pay my expenses at school for a year. My father consented to release me from the farm

labor and to allow me to go if the way should open. One of the teachers who had boarded with us, a scholarly old gentleman, owned a house in town. He reserved one room for his own occupancy when he was not teaching in the country. This dear man, Prof. J. B. Hunter, offered to share his room with me and to instruct me without charge provided I would furnish the ampler portion of the staple foods we should need. It may be readily understood that I eagerly accepted this proposition. The cooking was done on the fireplace in the one room the teacher and lone pupil occupied. I brought from the farm bacon, salted pork shoulder, corn meal, butter, potatoes, and such other things as could be spared from the not too large store of provisions in my father's house. Mr. Hunter bought the tea and the sugar and whatever fancy groceries we used. The arrangement was not ideal, but it was the best thing in sight and I profited from the relation.

I studied here for probably a half year and then I was able to secure and teach a country school. It was what was known as a "pay school." The tuition fee was a dollar a month per pupil. The community in which I taught was so remote that my loneliness was oppressive. My patronage was small and I did not make enough salary to pay my board. However, I learned in this distant section lessons of hardihood and self-reliance that have stood me in good stead throughout the years. As teacher I carried into the schoolroom ideas of discipline that I had gathered from those who had been over me. The rod was the supreme instrument of instruction. The community's conception of an efficient teacher was that he be able to thrash and subdue the big boys. I carried out this idea with terrible precision. My sternness was not so much because of innate hardness of heart and cruelty of disposition as because of fear. I was so small and so young that I was literally afraid of my pupils, and I thrashed them furiously to bluff them into submission lest they might discover their physical ability to overcome me.

This drastic course brought me many pains and involved me in constant embroilments. Only the rarest diplomacy kept me from being brutally beaten by irate parents. I recall one exceedingly narrow escape. The enraged man was a sawmill hand, ignorant and truculent. His boy had come in for the

usual chastisement. The father came to my room at night accompanied by a friend and urgently demanded that I take a walk down into a pine thicket where we could talk over the matter of the boy's punishment. I readily went to the designated place. Ordinarily it would have been a foolish thing to do. A maturer man would not have dared accept that invitation. But it seems that my very crassness saved me. The bullying parent, who intended to maul me unmercifully, was evidently convinced that I was not afraid of him, and then my explanation of the affair of the child's punishment may have had some weight. At any rate I returned to the house alive and untouched, but I shudder in bodily fear now as I think of what might have happened to me out there in the dark. Surely, it was a horrible system that brought such suffering and hardships on both teachers and pupils.

The next year was a happier time for me. My purposes crystallized and my opportunities broadened near home. Instead of accepting the appointment to the State University, I went to Hineman University School at Monticello. This was a small training school for boys and girls, named for, founded, and conducted by Mr. J. H. Hineman, a graduate of Bingham School, and for these past thirty years prominent in educational circles in Arkansas. The school had the highest and most exacting standards. The work was one continuous drill and the preparation was the last word in thoroughness. The honor pupils took high rank in many colleges—and not a few have unrivalled preëminence in the learned professions and higher walks of life. Though a zealous Methodist, Mr. Hineman inspired and launched upon careers of preëminent usefulness many Baptist preachers. His fair method of instruction and his open and keen analysis of every subject no doubt had much to do with his school being a sort of nondenominational incubator for Baptist Colleges and Seminaries.

For a little more than a year here I had what might be termed a gloriously hard time. I got both my tuition and board on credit. It took all the wages I earned at my next summer's school to pay these two bills. But, despite the practice of economy, there were other expenses that had to be provided for. Books and clothes were prime necessities. I labored on Saturdays and afternoons. I worked on the streets of the city

throwing gravel in the mudholes, and sometimes at a near-by brickyard. For a ten-hour day I received the wage of one dollar. That was considered good pay and I thought myself fortunate. For a while I was janitor of the public school building. For this service I got five dollars a month. The contrast of the time is seen when I here write it down that I have not been able at all times since my affliction to keep a colored valet at ten dollars a week and board.

During this term at my boarding place I was fortunate in the literature I found on the library table. I made acquaintance with such heavy magazines as The Forum and The Arena. These periodicals carried my citizenship from Arkansas to Boston. Since then the intellectual supremacy of "The Hub" has been to me a fascination and a delight unalloyed.

The outstanding event of this school year was the lyceum lecture course inaugurated and successfully conducted by the principal. There were five numbers. The men were all specialists in their lines and their impress is upon that town until this day. There was Col. Copeland, a star performer in his famous humorous skit, "Snobs and Snobbery." Then came Col. Sanford, the world traveler, who made our eyes bulge as he told us he had crossed the ocean nineteen times. Dr. Hedley brought us his "Love and Laughter." Dewitt Miller told us of California and the Golden West. But greatest of all was that prince of the platform, who yet lives in mellow old age, George R. Wendling of Philadelphia. God never made a man of handsomer stage presence nor gave to speaking mortal a sweeter voice. His every feature was noble, every thought was sublime and grace was in all his movements. In a southern town he naturally expected to be asked for his lecture on "Stonewall Jackson." So sure was he of this that upon arriving upon a belated train, he took from his satchel the address on the great southern soldier. But he was privately beseeched to give his marvelous sermon on "Immortality." There were local reasons for this. A strong sentiment of unbelief was dominant in the little town. One leading citizen and office-holder was an avowed agnostic. The doctrines of infidelity were boldly proclaimed and the danger to the educated young was imminent. Perilous to the souls were the times. I can never forget Mr. Wendling's opening sentence: "If a man die,

shall he live again?" The rafters quivered with the fervor of his oratory. The walls reverberated with the grandeur of his periods. The gale thundered his anathemas against unbelief and the zephyrs softly wafted to broken and doubting hearts the deathless consolations of the blessed hope. After that lecture infidelity in Monticello was dead. Since that night the place has been a new town. Ministers and missionaries and serving Christian teachers have been the heavenly products of the hill-girt Capital of Drew County.

CHAPTER VI

NATURAL QUALIFICATIONS LACKING AND ENDOWMENTS WANTING

I am amazed at my own temerity in attempting to carve out a public career for myself. Never was there a sorrier specimen of boyhood out of which to make a leader. I was a tow-headed, tallow-faced, indifferent looking, undersized youngster. There was not a strikingly strong characteristic to my entire personality. I was painfully timid. In company my embarrassment was agony unconcealed. I suffered tortures in the presence of my betters. I constantly contrasted my own limitations with the more favored persons of my acquaintance. I had a hesitancy in speech that almost made me a stammerer, and when called upon even to talk in the family circle a dizziness would seize me and my words were flighty and contradictory. When I essayed public address, I was afflicted with nausea. My knees knocked and my whole frame trembled and the audience was a sea-rolling maze before me. The fairies put not a single oratorical gift into my cradle; neither by inheritance was I more favored. As far back as my lineage can be traced, there is no record of an effective public speaker.

It was left for me to break the long years of forensic silence. The task was almost an insuperable one. I resorted to every conceivable stratagem to cure my defects. I read aloud by the hour; I taught my tongue the twist of words; and I practiced my voice in the roll of sentences. I traveled unfrequented paths thru the woods that, unheard and unobserved, I might declaim in the presence of the forest. Between the plowhandles I sonorously thundered the masterpieces of the ancient worthies. Every stump and fallen log in the lonely field served as my pulpit or platform. The barn was a favorite trying-out place for the witchery of advocacy, with the horse and cow as my dumb and unresponsive auditors. I marvel at the persistency of my efforts. To this day I suffer many of

the same handicaps that made my youthful ebullitions one continuous torture. Never in my life have I gone into the pulpit unafraid. I have had to force myself to affect indifference as I trod the rostrum. Constant appearances did not allay the fear nor did ceaseless repetition cure the malady. Stage fright was my portion in the beginning and has been my bugbear to the end.

Singularly enough I have succeeded in deceiving the public and even my most intimate friends have thought me gifted in the art of public discourse, especially that of extemporaneous address. The multitude jumps at conclusions and all too often goes upon the basis of contrast. I suppose most men are thus misjudged. I have suffered cruelly from the hastily formed opinions of many puritanical deacons and of numberless outwardly pious Christians because I have laughed and quipped and joked. These I did to keep from crying. I smiled to hide my tears and laughed aloud to drown the uprising wails and I had the misfortune of being judged by the outward appearance rather than by the billowing sorrows that surged over my soul.

I was of a mercurial, French temperament and my Latin blood caused me to hate the routine and monotony of work-a-day existence. The continuous task was intolerable to me. I had to lash myself to the oar, if I were to propel the galley. I forced myself to bend to the hardest labor and subjected my entire being to the most terrible discipline of life's common exactions that I might serve my generation with credit and meet the most repulsive duties with the fortitude of a man. Therefore I was always driving or being driven. Uncongenial duties met me at every turn. I think I can modestly say, tho I winced I never shirked. I had no talent for continuous, sustained toil; yet I goaded myself until I could perform the labor of a quarry slave. If possible, I was more wanting in ability to write than to speak. My penmanship was a scrawl of undecipherable hieroglyphics. It is no exaggeration to say that it was with great difficulty that I read my own writing when it became cold. I had not the patience to transfer my thoughts to paper and for years I was ashamed to send such execrable manuscripts as I produced to the printer. One blessing probably will emerge—my family and friends will surely not be

bothered with any barrels of my sermons. Not a dozen dim and musty outlines will I leave to clutter the library or to pester posterity. Not until typewriters became common and I could command the service of an amanuensis did I arrest the attention of the Christian public thru the denominational press.

In all the spectacular elements that capture the minds of men and enthrall their hearts, I was sadly lacking. In fact, a critic when writing up a contest in which I was a participant said that there was not a line of the leader seaming my face. This thrust drove me to mental labor so intense that furrows were ploughed in my face and the hoar-frost sprinkled my hair. The peroration of Broadus in his matchless tribute to Gessner Harrison, "Fear God and Work," became my motto. Thus persistent toil in a measure offset temperamental and congenital delinquencies.

My desultory and unsystematized habits of reading, and fugitive schemes of study did not fit me for the severe grind of organized high school and college discipline. I was not a well-rounded student. My shortcomings in mathematics were always painfully apparent. Discursive learning was my forte rather than the prescribed course. I was said to be good in Latin and I took the honors in English, History, and Rhetoric; and in general reading I had no peer; but from the standpoint of the schoolmen I was a baffling proposition. My brilliance in some studies gave the teachers good hope of developing me on all lines. But in this they were doomed to bitter disappointment. I do not for a moment defend my course, nor do I hold myself up as a criterion for any other student. I deplore the lopsidedness of my education. There are many excuses that I might offer, but these are now beside the mark. I was in desperate haste to get out of school and into life; and I was always short of funds, and I thought that high rank in some branches would be a set-off to my low attainments in other lines. Undoubtedly this was a mistake and in consequence I have been handicapped thru the years. It humbles me to the dust to have to here set down shortcomings that I have never before confessed. I make the revelation lest other youths may be tempted to presume and follow in my own footsteps to their own undoing. I was unable to earn a degree and of course never received a diploma. My education might be termed as scrappy, disjointed and angular. The midnight toil of a quar-

ter of a century has in some measure atoned for the early errors, but the price I paid was a terrible one. I have tried to see that my children did not follow in my footsteps and I have founded a college to do the work for others that was never done for me.

CHAPTER VII

AN ADDED CHAPTER ON PIGS, 'POSSUMS AND POTATOES

Hitherto I have said little about the pastimes and pranks of my boyhood. In the preceding chapters the chronicle has been straightforward and the serious note has been dominant. The melancholy most poignantly affects the introspective child. Grim care grins over his shoulder and cuts the hard line of its history into his very being. Lest I should be charged with a pessimism to which I am a stranger both by nature and by grace, I purport here to record the lighter side of my boyhood's uneven pilgrimage. Certainly the usual variety of work and play, fun and frolic vouchsafed to the child of my day was not denied me. Hunting was the chief diversion of that time. Old-fashioned double-barrelled muzzle-loading shotguns and long, one-balled rifles were the weapons used. The powder was first put in the barrel of the shotgun and this was held down by paper wadding which was tightly pounded with a ramrod. On top of the wadding the shots were poured, then other paper was rammed down to hold the shots in place. Caps were placed on the tube and the gun was ready for action. There was a trunk full of old Confederate money on our place, all of which was used as gun wadding by my half-brothers and uncles. Many is the time I have wished some of that money had been saved as historic reminders of the lost cause. The loading of the rifle was very like unto the process of charging the shotgun, except that the lone ball was wrapped in a piece of tough cloth called a "patching" and then rammed down on the wadded powder.

Squirrel hunting was the liveliest sport and also the best meat-producing excursion of the nimrods of my time. Very little boys were permitted to accompany the gun bearers to "turn the game." When a squirrel was treed he naturally

placed a limb or the body of the tree between himself and the hunter. It was the business of the boy to go around and shake a bush that he might frighten the squirrel and drive him in range of the man with the gun. At the crack of the gun the body of the little animal would hit the ground with a sickening thud, where sometimes a battle royal would take place between the dog and the boy for possession of the dead squirrel.

Coons were so prolific that often the green corn crop was endangered. I have seen their tracks by the tens of thousands on the moist ground along the banks of a creek. The coon was a wary varmint and when chased by dogs usually climbed the biggest tree he could find. It was the sport of stalwarts to cut the tree down and set the dogs to the task of killing the coon in fair fight. Coon skins covered the barns, chicken houses and the cabin doors of the backswoodsman. I have seen horses so laden with these dried pelts that you could scarcely distinguish the animal as it wended its way marketward with its cargo of coon skins.

The trouble about the table fare of the farmer of that day was that it was either a feast or a famine. In the spring we had milk and butter, but in the winter we had none. As was often said, we had things in their season. We almost starved between beef and bacon. Hogs were of two varieties, wild razorbacks on the range and tame hogs at home. Nearly every farmer had hogs at home and also a "claim" among the wild hogs in the woods. These latter were always mast fed—that is, they lived upon whatever they could find until the acorns fell and then they were fattenend upon these. The flesh of mast fed hogs was not solid nor firm, and therefore did not keep very well. Often before cold weather, when in need of meat the farmer would with corn entice a fat razorback to some open spot, where the hog would be shot and then tethered by a short rope to the tail of horse or mule and dragged home for dressing and consumption. In addition to swine and cattle, my father usually had a small flock of roaming and depredating goats. In the lean days of summer we quite often had fresh kid, the flesh of which was esteemed a great delicacy by meat-hungry children. I remember that on two occasions we had bear meat. The flesh was very like bacon, though the grease was of a more oily consistency. White soft-shelled turtle made a dish fit for

a king, and smoked rabbit was esteemed a delicacy good enough for a connoisseur. The rabbit was dressed and hung high up in the chimney above the old-fashioned fireplace, where it was thoroughly cooked and blackened. When wanted, the meat was stripped off and eaten. The negroes taught us this method of rabbit cooking.

But the most wonderful sport for juveniles was 'possum catching. In the fall of the year, the old 'possum is fat and lazy. Any sort of a dog can run upon one in the weeds or chase him into a small sapling where he is easily captured. When caught, the 'possum affects death by "sulking." He can then be borne home with impunity. The usual boy scheme with a live 'possum was to stick his tail into the aperture of a green pole riven by the blade of an axe. That securely held the game as the ends of the pole were borne on the shoulders of two boys, one behind the other. The last and most successful 'possum hunt I remember, we caught four; one so large and so vicious that he would never "sulk"; he growled and snapped at us all the way to the house. Though a scavenger of the forest and the barn yard, when properly prepared opossum is the most toothsome dish ever set before a ravenous wayfarer. There is just one time to eat him, in the fall of the year after frost, when persimmons are ripe and potatoes are sweet.

This furry varmint is killed by placing a piece of wood across the back of his neck, securely held down by the foot of the slayer, while with the hands the executioner pulls the victim over by the tail. This results in a broken neck and a quick and painless death. The hair is removed by rolling the body in a bed of steaming embers—that is, red hot coals and ashes upon which water has been poured. The result is a roll of clean, white flesh. Then the animal is eviscerated, laid open and placed inside out upon the housetop for the frost of a chilly night to fall in and freeze him. That takes away the 'possum odor and draws from the flesh the jungle funk. The next morning the carcass is taken down, placed in a large oven, lined with sliced sweet potatoes that will exude candy at the touch of fire, a slow-burning wood fire is kept going under the oven and on the lid for hours or until the escaping savory odor tells the experienced housewife that the dish is done. Words fail me now. Language is too poor to describe the ravishing

aroma and the toothsomeness of this incomparable culinary triumph. As Governor Taylor said of the old lady in the mountains of east Tennessee, "The best vegstubble that ever melted on these old gums of mine is kerpossum."

CHAPTER VIII

CONVERSION AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

I cannot remember when I did not fear God. I was ever awed by the mightiness of Jehovah and the terrors of the law consumed me. Tho fearfully depraved, I was always religiously inclined. From memory's dawn two principles contended within me for the mastery of my soul. The little prayers taught me by my mother were repeated with nightly regularity, the one beginning, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep," was said until I graduated into what is known as the Lord's prayer. Very early I made additions to these petitions. I did this because I felt the need of it. My spiritual history is not pleasant in retrospect, neither I fear will it make easy or acceptable reading. Never at any time was my soul's course smooth and even. Companions, environment, unwise direction, all doubtless had their share in the anxieties and abnormalities that possessed me. Inward doubt and depression not infrequently obtained the mastery over me. I was never sure. The most splendid rhapsodies were often succeeded by the darkest forebodings. My consciousness of sin was uncannily keen. I never had any sort of doubt about the fall of Adam and the fearful consequences of the curse pronounced upon our first parents and thru them upon all posterity. To me that doctrine was ever clear and its application to myself was incontrovertibly personal. That I was an outcast, utterly and justly lost, seemed a fact beyond debate.

To me every favor of the Most High was unmerited grace. I walked around my fellows smiling, but thoroughly despising myself. And I was afraid; afraid of God, afraid of death, and afraid of judgment. I thought myself the greatest of all sinners, and this too at a very tender age. I was obsessed with the idea of special judgments and bemoaned the afflictions that came upon my family, fearing that they were providential dis-

pensations sent in punishment of my sins. I well remember going home from school one day and finding my baby brother, of whom I was passionately fond, in the paroxysms of a congestive spasm. I was struck with the conviction that I was responsible for his condition and this distress drove me to the back of the house to pray. So it was with all the woes of the neighborhood. The deaths in the homes of our neighbors and the funerals at the neighboring cemetery all bore upon me with a weight crushingly heavy and pierced me thru with unrelievable sorrows. Vicariously I suffered for all my little world. And there was heaped upon me the heartaches of my entire realm. The accusing finger of Deity seemed always pointed at me. I hated and shuddered at death and yet every death was my death.

The consolations of the tenderer and dearer parts of the Bible had not been explained to me and their comforting assurances were not stressed so as to relieve the dread blackness of my accumulated despair. The very terrors that clutched my heart drew me to the place of mourning. I would have given worlds to stay from the dead and from the cemetery, but my own heart agony drew me to both and I was probably the loneliest and most miserable soul that fearfully approached the death chamber and the graveyard. At every impending calamity I sought alone a place of prayer. This trysting place with God was usually the chimney corner at the farther end of the house. My prayer was characterized by intercessory pleading and piteous confession of personal unworthiness. I wonder now if this supermorbidity was an over-development of egoism or the result of too great emphasis upon the fundamental doctrines of sin, or was it what it seemed to be, my predestined mission to be the vicarious sufferer for all I knew and of whom I heard. The souls as well as the bodies of my brothers seemed to be my special care. The moment one of them was taken sick, I had no peace and no rest until recovery was evident.

When I was about fourteen my brother next to me was stricken with pneumonia of a most virulent type. The agony of those weeks is burned into me. I trembled on the threshold of his room, not daring to go in and look upon his suffering form; yet I could not tear myself far enough away to be beyond

the sound of his cries of pain. I did without sufficient food, and sleep fled from my eyes. To show my distracted condition, let me recite a wild tale of my church attendance one day at the crisis of my brother's illness. There was a Methodist quarterly meeting going on a mile and a half from our house. In the hope of help and to escape from the heart depressing atmosphere of the suffering home, I mounted my pony and hurried to church. But so anxious and distraught was I, that I left the service in its beginning and went home at a lively pace. So distressing was the condition of my brother that I could not remain at the house, and I again mounted my horse, went back to the church, heard the conclusion of the sermon, and lingered to the close of the service. So quickened was my every faculty and so overwrought my nerves, that to this day I remember portions of the sermons of the two men, for there were two who preached, one following the other.

Fortunately my brother recovered, and I had again a breathing spell from the stressful days thru which I had passed. But even these unusual soul experiences and heart tearing crises did not bring me immediately into the light. I could not see my way clear to make a public avowal of my faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. For me the way yet to the Cross was long and tortuous. I have an idea that I had been confused and misled by the experiences of older persons, and here is a psychological mistake of the first magnitude that was an error common to our fathers and the Christian workers of my day. All, children and grown people, were expected to be put in a common religious mold. It was thought that they must have the same convictions, the same experiences of grace, and the form of expression was to be identical.

Then, too, I had planned my own conversion. I had an idea that it should be a cataclysmic affair after the type of Paul. I awaited the voice from heaven and the blinding flash of a startling presence out of the sky. These never came. They could not come, for God could never allow a sinner to dictate the manner of his conversion. My emergence from darkness to light was a process slow and painful. Full of qualms and beset by doubts, I groped and tremulously felt my way; and when on one eventful night I did go forward in the old country church to make a public profession of faith in my risen Lord,

it was not a moment of dazzling brightness with parting crowds and shouting hosannas, but a time of deep contrition, subdued self, and hopeful trust, accompanied by an inexpressible peace that suffused my quiet soul. I only knew that I had passed from death unto life because I loved the brethren. Thru subsequent life I have had to fight for my faith. A few weeks later a small company of people witnessed my baptism in the unpretentious waters of an eddying pool in a creek near the public road. That ordinance pictured forth my theology, my belief in the Lord's death and resurrection, my death to sin and resurrection to newness of life in Christ Jesus, and my hope that this body of my mortality shall rise again.

The impression that I should preach was contemporaneous with the conviction that I should be a Christian. The two conceptions were allied and ran concurrently in my mind. But after my baptism I sought to delay entrance upon the ministry. I wanted to satisfy my early ambition to be a lawyer, achieve a reputation, accumulate a competency and go to Congress. I resorted to every mild device to postpone the hour of the great decision. I knew something of the hardships and unrewarded toils of preachers, and I felt more than the world can ever know my own utter unworthiness. This vacillating course gave every doubt a chance to do its perfect work. I fell upon trying times and, like Jonah, I tried to evade responsibility by fleeing the face of my Lord. I even went so far as to offer in compromise the evening of my life to the task of preaching if God would permit me to engage in secular employ in the strength of my manhood. It is needless to say that this trifling with the greatest of all issues increased my difficulties and covered me with confusion. My call was unequivocal and direct and the answer had to be a joyous acquiescence in the will of God or a flat refusal to obey His plainest command.

The days of my controversy with Jehovah were for me full of pain and peril. Satan ably assisted me in every argument that I submitted for putting off the inevitable. My sins, my temperament, my age-long inheritance of Christian powers untrained, all conspired to make me shrink from the high and holy calling of a messenger of God. The way to earthly preferment seemed to be open, but the path to the pulpit looked long and rugged. Not to living mortal did I tell my trials or reveal

the secrets of my heart, but all men seemed to know what was going on within me. I was astounded when fellow churchmen and pastor announced their belief that I would one day preach the gospel. It seemed that my fearful and beating heart had pounded out the news to listening ears. I had cringed and shrunk so long that I was beginning to feel myself a coward. I must have had the limp and furtive expression of a slacker. Why this indisposition on the part of a called man to obey his Master?—for thus has it ever been from Moses to the last preacher ordained. Only under the Divine compulsion will even a redeemed soul preach the unsearchable riches of grace. It was, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." The impulsion was unremittent, insistent, and clear. As a God-conquered man I could do no other, and the cry of glad surrender went up from my heart: "Lord, here am I, send me."

I cannot therefore say that I was surprised when, on one hot Sunday afternoon our little country church held a called conference under the shade of some small trees by the side of a schoolhouse in which rustic singers were making music at the tops of their voices, and licensed me to preach.

CHAPTER IX

COLLEGE, FIRST SERMONS, ORDINATION

When it was settled that I was to become a preacher, there was but one sort of educational institution suited to my needs —a Baptist college of unimpeachable denominational integrity and of unchallenged Christian character and teachings. Ouachita College at Arkadelphia fulfilled these conditions and met all reasonable requirements. After correspondence with President John W. Conger, I made the best and hastiest preparation I could to leave that fall for Arkadelphia. I had very little money, and some of that was borrowed, and my going-off outfit was pitifully meager. I had a trunk that cost four dollars, some books, a few pictures of loved ones and a scanty wardrobe.

The trip from Monticello was an eventful one, made upon three lines of railroads. My brother, now commander in the navy, accompanied me. He was going to attend a Northern Methodist university in Little Rock, where he could work his way. We were driven the six miles to Monticello with cheap trunks in the farm wagon drawn by a stubborn mule and a balky colt. The home leaving was a trying ordeal. There was mother, a father rapidly aging and three little brothers to be left behind. Ever and anon the question whether we were doing right in leaving home at all would arise to disturb us in our quest of an education and in our dreams of triumph. The journey itself was an epoch in the lives of two green country boys. We traveled all day and spent the night in a hotel in Little Rock.

There were some ludicrous sidelights to the trip. We arrived at Little Rock just as the electric lights came on in the evening. Never before had we seen spluttering arc lights illuminating a city, and in order to get the full benefit of this wonderful modern invention we walked up the middle of the street directly under the lights to our hotel. At our first meal in the hotel we were bewildered by the amazing number of

small dishes set before us, and at the table we held a whispered colloquy about the probable price of the meal if we should eat out of all the dishes. Next morning we were relieved to learn that there was no extra charge for the vast variety of foods served us.

My brother found his institution and settled to study and to work, and I left on an early morning train for the college city on the banks of the Ouachita river. On arriving at the station in Arkadelphia, I was highly elated over my reception. The college president did not meet me, neither was the mayor at the train, but numbers of people of whom I had never heard seemed to know me and to be looking for me. These turned out to be cab men and boarding house proprietors. A nice young married student captured me and bore me away to his house.

Unforgettable is my first morning in the college chapel. The student body was large enough and serious enough to be impressive, and as the faculty filed out upon the stage I was awed beyond powers of description at that human array of dignity and wisdom. The exercises were in keeping with the setting. Scripture reading by the president was almost dramatic in its thrilling impressiveness. The prayer was uplifting and the singing was tinglingly inspiring. The campus was a noble sight on the bluff of the river and the buildings were by far the most massive structures of the kind I had ever seen. The atmosphere of the school was unaffectedly Christian and the spirit of the institution was wholesomely democratic. There was learning without pedantry and piety without cant. To be sure, the standards were not then so high as they are now. The curriculum went from A, B, C to A.B. But the college nobly fulfilled its mission in the day in which its times were set. My reception was cordial and my presence was welcomed. Study was encouraged and demanded and discipline was maintained and right conduct enforced.

The college was thoroughly organized and the student societies were factors of tremendous educational and social value. They had beautifully furnished rooms in which to meet, were well officered, glowing with enthusiasm and had back of them noble histories and achievements of which they were justly proud. I soon joined the Hermesian Literary Society and

later the J. P. Eagle Society of Religious Inquiry. The latter was for ministerial students only, while the former did not have a record of enrolling the best scholars nor the most substantial class of men; it prided itself upon producing more poets, orators and medalists than its great rival, the Philomathian Society.

I was soon to see my first great gathering of Baptists. The Baptist State Convention held its annual session in Arkadelphia that year. Occasionally from our home county and church in the country some man would be a messenger to the state convention. He would bring back glowing accounts of the greatness of that body. And too I had read brief reports of these high convocations of former years in the state Baptist organ, and now I was to be in the midst of it all and really look upon the men of whom I had so often heard and around whose names imagination had cast a halo. In passing let me say that I saw and heard the giants and the princes of the church and behold I lived!

One morning at the chapel there was subdued but unwonted excitement. The audience of students was bright-faced and expectant. The faculty was dressed with unusual care. Extra chairs were placed upon the stage. The convention dignitaries were our guests that day. Books were thrown aside and the eminent visitors were given the right of way. That picture is ineffaceably engraved upon memory's wall as I dictate these lines. There were personages upon the platform and they beamed upon us wisely and benignantly. There was Dr. J. William Jones, representing the Home Mission Board. (I had sold his book, the "Life of Jefferson Davis," packing it upon my back as I tramped afoot over the country side, and I had read his other book, "Christ in Lee's Army.") He was round, fat and sassy and more than forty. Though it was November, he wore low-quartered shoes over white socks. In a voice singularly feminine and fine he told his four splendid preacher boys whose little mother could manage them as if they were still children.

Then there was Dr. W. P. Harvey, of the Western Recorder, the most "pizen" Baptist of all. He trod the stage militant and belligerent. An Irishman, reared a Roman Catholic, he shamelessly revelled in his New Testament faith and

Baptist liberty. He boomed out the word "Baptist" like a viking, defiant and unafraid. In the center of the stage sat a young man keen of eye and large of head. In a quarter of a century his name was to run through the corridors and classrooms of the universities of the globe. A library of eighteen books was to be the labor of his hand and the output of his genius. He distributed a little pamphlet at the convention on preaching and scholarship. This was his professorial inaugural address. He was A. T. Robertson, the son-in-law and assistant of the great Broadus in the seminary at Louisville, and now the noblest Greek of them all. At the church that scholarly knight of the republic of letters, W. R. L. Smith, pastor First Church, Nashville, represented the new Sunday school board that was petitioning for favor and seeking to serve. For the purest English extant, just read Dr. Smith's address on "Jeter, Fuller, Yates." Our literature is infinitely poorer because of the shrinking modesty of this marvelously gifted man. The tall and saintly Dr. T. P. Bell spoke for the Foreign Board and presented the claims for world-wide missions. This pious secretary and editor, after a life of noble service, a little while ago put off his harness and entered into the joys of his Lord. Governor James P. Eagle was president of the convention, and a mighty host of invincible warriors and scarred veterans of a thousand battles for the Cross led in the deliberations of the body. Their grizzled visages loom before me now, and their quenchless zeal and uncompromising convictions of truth are an inspiration to me unto this day. Most of these have long since joined the choir invisible, but their works do follow them. The seraphic and zeal-torn B. G. Maynard was the state secretary of Arkansas. Eternity alone will reveal the worth of this foundation layer's sojourn in Arkansas. A few years ago he went on high from his Missouri home.

These are the impressions of my first convention and its loftiness and glory shall not depart from me until all are merged in the convocation of the saints in the supernal splendors of the general assembly of the First Born.

There were few opportunities for the young theological aspirants to practice preaching in or around Arkadelphia. For some reason the churches and communities were rather inhospitable to youthful ecclesiastical invasion. The position of a

ministerial student at college is rather trying. It is expected of him that along with favorable progress in his studies whatever be his stage of learning, that he be pious, a leader in the religious activities of college and local church, and with all becomingly submissive. He is somehow expected to do enough preaching to learn the art. There is no provision made for him to have any systematic training in pulpit or pastorate. But he is expected upon his own initiative to find appointments and fill them, to gather congregations and preach to them. He is expected to learn denominational procedure while remaining inconspicuously in the background. I offer no solution of the problem and I make no complaint, but I am simply stating the difficulties. The theological seminary student has a better chance and a more established standing than the mere college ministerial student. After all, however, it is probably a good thing for the neophyte to be temporarily suppressed and kept in his place. One of my schoolmates had a monthly appointment at a new pine schoolhouse some three or four miles out from town. I persuaded him to allow me to accompany him on one hot Sunday afternoon. We walked the entire distance there and back in the heat and dust. My friend graciously permitted me to address the audience for a few minutes. This concession was indeed a favor for it was precious time taken from the hour of the regular preacher. As we returned, the only comment made by my brother upon my effort was, "Tardy, why do you make such an ugly face when you arise to speak?"

When the Christmas vacation came, I was out of money and of everything else that I needed to keep me in college. I went back to my home and did not return to the late winter and spring session. On the farm I tried to fit again into my old place as laborer and helper, but I was restive and anxious to preach. There could not possibly be any remunerative ministerial work awaiting me, for no man so young as I had ever been paid for preaching in all that section of country. Finally the pastor of the Baptist church in Monticello extended me an invitation to preach my first sermon in his pulpit. For some reason the pastor, the famous blind preacher, Dr. White, was to be absent on the day I was to appear. This was one source of embarrassment removed, for which I was devoutly thankful. I tried to prepare my sermon and my heart for the ordeal. I

was anxious, too, that the service should receive as little advertisement as possible. The fewer the hearers I had, the better I should like it. I never can forget that morning. I had made a few notes on the text, "Be ye not conformed to this world." These I carried into the pulpit. I was chagrined to see my old school principal file into the building, followed by cultured associates and not a few of my former fellow pupils. They came from the most innocent motives and out of the tenderest regard for me, but their presence made the cold chills race over me. I had to conduct the entire service, in addition to the task of trying to deliver my maiden sermon. In prayer my voice sounded hollow, and afar off. I found that talking to God on behalf of the people in public worship, was a holy and awesome thing. It was a heart-searching and soul-straining experience and it left me emptied, humbled, and dumb with amazement at my own audacity.

I hurried thru the hynms and struck furiously for the sermon. In the attempt to preach the sound of my own voice again frightened me. My notes got mixed before my dancing eyes, the audience swam before me, and floor and ceiling seemed to meet. The only redeeming feature was the brevity of my address. Probably in twelve minutes I had finished. It seemed that I had been trembling behind that pulpit for an age. I could have wished that the floor had opened and swallowed me. I should have rushed in the darkest cave had there been one near-by, to hide my shame and confusion. I was convinced that the effort was a dismal failure. I remember hoping that my friends and the people would all go out without speaking to me, for I was sure they could truthfully say nothing good of that service. To my surprise and overwhelming humiliation Professor Hineman, whose critical opinion I dreaded above that of all men, took me by the hand and said: "William, that was a very edifying discourse." That is the only comment that lingers with me, but it was enough and it has heartened me to try again after many failures. I preached only four more times in my native county, once at the church where I was converted and once at Collins near where I was born, and one time each at two other country churches.

In a few months my father made his last and longest intra-state move. This time he went twelve or fifteen miles west of

Pine Bluff, beyond the fringe of civilization and into the very heart of the wild. He had for many years owned some woods land in that locality and after selling his Drew County farm he purchased a partially improved place near his other holdings on the lines of Jefferson and Grant Counties. This was a disastrous financial transaction for my father, but in many ways the Lord made the move redound in blessings to the children. Not being able to go back to college, I again dropped into my old place at the farm and was subject to my parents. In those remote and weirdly rural surroundings I made the best of my father's bad bargain and bent every energy of my being to assist in mending the family fortunes. I preached to the strangely ignorant folk and both my mother and I taught school in those far off jungles.

There came at length one summer a providential opening of preëminent significance to me. I learned that the new pastor, Rev. W. K. Penrod, of the First Baptist Church, Pine Bluff, was to preach one Sunday afternoon at White Sulphur Springs, a resort seven miles from the city and more than that distance from where we lived. I determined not to lose the opportunity of hearing this town preacher whose fame had reached the country side. Therefore I made it a point to attend the service at the Springs. The sermon was on the faith of Abraham. All of the events of that afternoon are yet fresh in my memory. I met Dr. Penrod and he invited me to visit him in Pine Bluff and to preach in his church. Later that noble pastor led his splendid congregation in sending me back to college. The finest tailored suit of clothes that I ever owned was given to me by friends that I here made. I placed my membership in that outstanding church, and the results amply justified the relationship.

A year or two later that sovereign congregation called for my ordination and on a rainy Sunday morning before a filled house, the pastor preached my ordination sermon from the text, "Let no man despise thy youth." The presbytery was composed of the elders of the church and the deacons, and Dr. W. A. Clark, editor of the Arkansas Baptist, who presented the Bible at the conclusion of the public oral examination. Mr. John T. Marsh, a great churchman and a leading business man of the city, arose and made the following motion: "Brother Moder-

ator, I move you, sir, that the church instruct the presbytery to proceed with the ordination of our young brother by the laying on of our hands." I bent the knee and bowed my head, while the hands of those good men were caressingly laid upon me. That was the supreme moment of my youth. It marked the official sanction of my dreams and the ecclesiastical recognition of the inner urge. So far as a church could do it, I was now set apart to the full work of the gospel ministry. Ever afterwards I had an open road. The zeal, confidence, and approbation of that prominent church gave a momentum to my upward climb and an impetus to my preaching crusade that the oppositions of a quarter of a century have not been able to check.

I cannot close this chapter without a further word regarding the life and character of my beloved friend and pastor, Rev. W. K. Penrod. He was a Kentuckian who early moved to central Texas. In Ellis County he heard the call to preach and got his training under the great masters at the Seminary at Louisville. After a notably successful pastorate at Pine Bluff, he wrought heroically at the First Church, Paducah, Kentucky. Then for years he was the solidly upbuilding leader of the Tabernacle Church at Ennis, Texas. Later he happily ministered to the First Church at Cleburne for a long pastoral tenure. And now in the mellowed glory of life's soft evening, he is preaching to the saints at Gonzales and leading many to righteousness, while he patiently waits until the Master comes, the hem of whose garment he shall touch and be forever young.

CHAPTER X

PASTORATES IN THREE STATES

After my ordination a great door and effectual opened unto me. Invitations poured upon me and the bars were down everywhere. Even before this I had been preaching once a month at Alexander, a little town more than fifty miles from Arkadelphia on the Iron Mountain towards Little Rock. For each monthly visit I received a stipend of five dollars. Often have I said that not since have I ever had so much money to spend for the smaller things of life. My visits to Alexander were a joy and my associations there with the small company of people a delight. As I remember, the church had sixteen members who worshiped in a rather pretty little building in which, I should think, I preached to from thirty to fifty people. Here I had one convert for baptism, but I was called to another field before I could administer the ordinance.

In the summer of my second year at college, by virtue of the recommendations of Dr. Penrod and other influential friends, I was invited to assume the pastorate of the Baptist church at Camden, Arkansas, while still continuing my studies. This was the most surprisingly acceptable honor that ever came to me. Camden was an old town long since fully grown, of no inconsiderable wealth and culture. The membership of the Baptist church was the superbest organization of redeemed wayfarers I have ever known. There were only about sixty-five communicants, but they were the salt of the earth and the elect of the Lord. Worldly prosperity was just beginning to smile upon some of the leaders. The Civil War aftermath had not yet been lived through and as in most ancient towns of the haughtier sort, Baptists were a financially feeble folk, often secretly despised and not infrequently openly contemned. But the piety and character of this congregation commanded the admiration and respect of all the right-thinking people of the community. Scions of illustrious families were on the church

rolls. The Lides of South Carolina, the Watts of Alabama, and the Lees of Virginia and Mississippi, and the Rowlands were some of the foremost families who bore the burdens and gave standing to the little church.

The building, a huge two-story brick, though in a strategic location, was a veritable handicap and an estoppel of growth. The lower floor was owned by the church and the upper story by the Masonic lodge. This double proprietorship and dual occupancy militated most seriously against the church. However, there was no friction between the two bodies, but on the contrary each showed to the other the profoundest consideration. For twenty years this condition has been changed. The church owns the entire property and worships in a beautiful modern edifice fully adapted to all the needs of Kingdom building.

In this pastorate I received what was then regarded a munificent salary. The figures were six hundred dollars a year. And I had nothing to do but preach on Sundays. I came from college on Saturday and returned on Monday. My permanent residence in Camden was in the lovely and spacious home of Mr. and Mrs. M. P. Watts. For a year and a half I dwelt under the roof-tree of this incomparable couple in great comfort and affluence—and all without charge. Mr. Watts has become one of the opulent merchants and great churchmen of Arkansas. In some respects Mrs. Watts was the brightest woman I have ever known. Their care for me was singularly sweet and tender and away and beyond any claims I had upon them and infinitely far above my deserts. I most humbly record my deepest gratitude to these dear people for pouring their rich lives into the very being of one so little deserving their love and hospitality. In my third year at college I won for Ouachita the Intercollegiate State Oratorical Medal. This was the first time the trophy had ever been captured by a representative of our Institution. I tried with becoming modesty to use the prestige of this high honor to advance the Kingdom of my Lord and Master. Following my success in the State Oratorical Contest, came an invitation to deliver the Commencement address at my old high school at Monticello. In some respects this was the proudest moment of my life, for here the insuperable trials of impecunious youth flowered in the

victories of triumphant manhood in the arena of former defeats.

My face was now turned toward Texas. This was but the logic of birth and parental influence. The first creeping of all my mother's children must have been toward the west. All came to the Lone Star State so soon as they were old enough. There is not one of my name in Arkansas except those who are under the sod. The church at Jefferson, Texas, issued me an invitation to visit them with a view to a call. I went to that historic old town whose commercial supremacy had long since vanished, and preached in the building that had in the seventies housed the Southern Baptist Convention and where the eminent W. W. Landrum had been ordained. Though the call was extended me, I declined and accepted instead the church at Longview, both because the latter city was farther out in Texas, a throbbing young town, and because the church was ambitious and aggressive.

On the Monday of my return from Jefferson to Arkansas I was caught in one of the most terrific railroad wrecks of the century. The two fast North and South Cannon Ball trains collided head on at full speed on a curve a few miles north of Queen City. The impact of the smashing engines as they thundered into each other derailed and wrecked car after car. I believe seven were killed and many times that number were injured. In a wondrously mysterious and a peculiarly gracious manner the Lord preserved me from all physical harm. On boarding the train at Jefferson I carried my luggage into the chair car, the coach I invariably occupied when traveling. Though there were numbers of vacant seats, I walked undecidedly down the aisle into the first pullman, through this into the second pullman, not stopping until I stretched myself out to rest on the lounge in the smoking compartment at the rear of the second pullman. I was lying here when the crash came. The horrors of the wreckage, the frightened screams of the hurt, and the ghastly faces and moans of the dying benumbed me into a rigid calm. The terrible reaction came some days later. In my sleep the maddening crash of destructively telescoping trains and the piteous horrors of dying men and wailing women would come upon me with painful vividness and shock me with unbelievable severity. Whatever the critics and scep-

tics may say, I shall hold to my original conviction that the Lord saved me by his own special providence and protected me by the might of his outstretched arm.

In September, 1894, I entered upon the duties of a delightful and prosperous pastorate at Longview. The youthfulness of the church and congregation and the western self-assertiveness of a growing town, caused them to follow my leadership with a devotion and spontaneity rarely beautiful and nobly inspiring. In October I attended the Baptist General Convention of Texas, which met in the First Church at Marshall. This session was notable for precipitating the great State-wide Baptist war, originating in individual ambitions and personal feuds which for so many years wrought untold harm to vital religion and denominational integrity, and the final effects of which are just now being forever effaced in the growing fraternity and sweeeter fellowship of a better day. The atmosphere was not good for young pastors and plastic boys. I must confess that for two years I was on the wrong side in the great controversy. I might plead my immaturity, my environment, and my advisors, but my brethren forgave my defection with unaffected graciousness and for more than twenty years have with open arms welcomed me to their inner councils. But this is a digression. It is not my purpose to write the history of Texas Baptists, but my own life.

At Longview I found my wife and here our first child was born. In the spring 1895 my first hard sorrow came in the sudden death of my father on his little farm in Arkansas. Since the hour the yellow slip, telling me the awful news, was placed in my hands, I have been afraid of telegrams. With my bride a sad journey was made back to my native State, where in a woodland cemetery the body of my dear parent was put among the graves of strangers on a spot unmarked to this day. The heart-rending pathos of the funeral was that I had to read the scripture at my own father's burial.

It took all the property possessed by my father to liquidate his debts and to give his body the plainest interment. Everything went under the hammer; houses, lands, live-stocks, and chattels and movables of all descriptions. I think my mother had some pillows, three or four featherbeds, and some fairly comfortable wearing apparel for the family left. The family

consisted of three brothers, my mother, and her orphan niece. They all came to live with me and my young wife in the parsonage at Longview. Thus in less than three months after I married, I was the head and only visible support of a family of seven. The filial duty was imperative, however backbreaking the burden for one so young and so poor as I. It took nearly two-thirds of a month's salary for me to pay the railroad fare of my loved ones to my home.

I know now that I sinned grievously in my ignorance, my pride, and my boundless ambition for the progress of my transplanted relatives. Often I was too exacting with my poor little country brothers, but I meant them good with all my heart, and I loved them with a passionate devotion. But this relation of two families in one small pastor's home could not last and a few weeks before our first baby was born my mother set up housekeeping on a modest scale in a rented house, where she taught a private school and somehow kept the wolf from the door.

After not quite two years' service at Longview, I entered upon the pastorate of the First Baptist Church at Palestine. The prime cause of my move was that I was afflicted with the mania for what was then called "a larger field." Palestine was larger than Longview, but the church was not so wealthy nor so commanding as the one I left. The building was what was known as "The Nickel Church." It was erected thru the genius and tireless energies of Major W. E. Penn, the famous evangelist. Money was gathered from all parts of the globe for this enterprise. The first story was built from nickel contributions, therefore the name. But in order to complete the building, subscription standards had to be raised and larger contributions were invited and accepted. For many years this was the most commanding church building in the city, on a location that showed rare wisdom and foresight. The congregation had been gathered by evangelists from the four winds and in consequence the church never had been a substantial, aggressive, and dependable fraternity. Pastors came and went with comic and alarming frequency. The audiences were uniformly large, but their consistency was nebulous. This does not mean that there were not many very fine people in the church, nor does it mean that a great deal of Kingdom work

of the highest value was not done. It only means that the conditions were not ideal.

The parsonage was an old sprawling brick building far up the rambling red hills beyond the church. It was a blue day for my lovely wife when I carried her and our round young baby to that desolate abode. With the furniture that we had it was simply impossible to make that grotesque piece of architecture look like anything on the inside. In time, however, we learned to love the old place and to appreciate the comforts of the thick walls and friendly roof. New acquaintances ripened into friends and my brief but intensive ministry was in some respects phenomenally successful. Crowds waited upon the Word, scores were converted and baptized, and my machine gun attacks upon popular vices made the indifferent and wicked old town acknowledge my presence and rise in antagonistic answer to my assaults. There were many puissant souls who supported me with a courage and devotion beyond praise. Some of these have crossed the River and some are crossing now, while others are yet left to carry the heavier loads of the newer and weightier responsibilities.

The remarkable conversion of an aged paralyzed man is one of the outstanding features of my Palestine ministry. The old gentleman had to be brought into the church on the strong and friendly arms of men who were interested in his soul. Three times only did he come. The first sermon he heard, under the second appeal he surrendered, and at his third attendance he was baptized. My information is that the happily converted old man was never able to enter the church after the night of his baptism. Soon after this turning point in his long career of sin and doubt, death swept him into the presence of his gloriously reconciled Father. Brother A. M. Glenn, a man of gigantic physical proportions, but with the heart of a little child, will wear in his crown the fadeless star of God's high reward for leading this decrepit and shrinking old man to the foot of the Cross.

After an absence of twenty-one years I returned not long ago to give my war lectures in the beautiful audience room of the new church at Palestine. My reception was an ovation. Governor Campbell introduced me and friends of the elder days joined the younger throngs in plaudits that almost broke

my heart with joy unspeakable. With a pensive wistfulness I sought the haunts of the past and in my invalid chair I was rolled by the old church and the old parsonage. A grocery store was doing a thriving business in the temple where I had so often preached. I suppose there was nothing wrong in it, but I must confess that there was a mist in my eyes, a choke in my throat, and a tug at my heart when I saw bales of hay, sacks of flour, and cans of coffee and lard in the vestibule of the sacred old house where the feet of the saints had so often trod. The parsonage was the same. I rolled round its squatty walls and thought of the times without number I had left my lonely wife and baby there unprotected, as I went out to visit or preach, and the sensitive soul of a mature man reproached me for my thoughtlessness and neglect. I remember, too, the desperate illness that came so near snatching from us our first-born in the morning of his babyhood, and I saw the very spot upon which the little fellow stood when he first cried for me not to leave him. That appealing wail of the baby awakened to love, thrilled me with a fatherly pride that has sweetened all the years of parental toil and anxiety.

After a ministry of fourteen months in Palestine I removed to Paris. Here I went to what was known as the orthodox wing of the disrupted First Baptist Church. The character of the call decided me. I had never visited Paris and the congregation there had never seen or heard me. The first intimation I had that I was under consideration for the pastorate was a telegraphic notification that the call had been extended. My answer was a quick and emphatic acceptance. I thought then the manner employed in filling that pulpit was the acme of wisdom and the epitome of directing grace. I am not so sure of all of this now. Probably there should be a little deliberation and investigation, and surely the preacher should give longer consideration in answering than I did in this instance. Looking back from the long distance of two decades I feel, however, no regrets and had I to do it over, with ample time for contemplation, the course of action should be the same.

Paris is the loveliest and most beautiful little city in which we have ever lived. There was a bitter legal battle for the possession of the handsome common church property. My faction won in the District and Appellate Courts, but lost

finally in the Court of Last Resort. This was as it should be, and the results should teach Baptists to settle their own troubles among themselves without calling up Caesar to intervene. I never saw the inside of the beautiful First Church building while I lived in Paris. Our worship was conducted in three places, a public school building, an improvised tabernacle and Myer's Auditorium. The latter, the permanent church home. Unusual outward success crowned my labors here. A large and regular audience was gathered, conversions were frequent and a spirit of generous responsiveness was developed in the people. The old time truths were stressed, and the emphasis I was forced to place upon the eternal verities and gospel fundamentals greatly clarified the religious atmosphere and mightily established the faith of true believers of every name throughout the entire city. When I had carried the church as far as I thought I could, I handed in my irrevocable resignation and left without any favorable outlook for an immediate settlement in another pastorate. Despite the strained relation between the two wings of the church and the long drawn out legal contest I look back upon my Paris ministry and view it in the whole as a labor of delight and a joy continuous. In that city I had the privilege inexpressible of baptizing my youngest brother, and there our second child, now a lieutenant in the army, was born.

In May, 1918, I made my first and only return visit to Paris since the day I left twenty years before. The occasion was one of unexampled auspiciousness. I preached in the morning and at night I lectured in the great Greek temple called the meeting house of the First Baptist Church. This is a building of surpassing beauty and a pile of noble dignity. Over a thousand people crowded the classic upper audience room to hear my lecture in the evening. Many to whom I had formerly preached had embarked for the shore and were already seeing their Pilot "face to face," while others whose love is deathless warmly grasped my twisted hands and heard me with an interest that arrested the flow of my fast ebbing life. Rev. W. B. Kendall has been the peerless leader here for twelve years, and to his vision and indomitable preseverance, heartily seconded by an innumerable company of earth's saintliest souls and inspired by the unfailing charm of Mrs. Kendall, an incomparable

pastor's companion, is this architectural poem in brick and stone attributable. I shall be pardoned for calling the name of another: Mrs. Captain D. S. Hammond, the Dorcas and Priscilla of the church, yet abides in sanctified serenity and holy labors.

My next pastorate was the First Church at Greenville. There was an interval of some two months between my Paris and Greenville pastorates. The call to the latter place had like that of the former come to me without my knowledge or solicitation. The news of my election was conveyed to me over the long distance telephone. My only visit to Greneville had been some two or three years before to preach the Commencement Sermon for Burleson College.

I moved to the city of the blackland prairies in the dead of the dreadfullest winter I have ever known. I slushed in the sable mud of the streets as I staggered in the clutches of the most remorseless attack of the grippe that ever laid siege to my vitals.

It is with great diffidence that I pen a line of the church conditions as I found them, and what I shall say soever shall be with becoming modesty and self-restraint of uncommon rigor. Suffice to record that the denominational leaders of that era know something of how hard bestead and fiercely set upon I was from the very beginning. The church had had a long tutelage under able men against the plans and policies of the denomination. In fact, this church was the last great bulwark of the stalwarts of the old regime of reactionism. Burleson College was sought to be made the educational storm center around which the defenders of the old gritty uncompromising and unyielding spirit should gather. The religious war that burst around me in most fateful fury was probably the bitterest and most intensive internecine church battle of modern times. The strife was continuous and merciless. Quarter was neither asked nor given. On one side, fought the defenders of the old order; on the other side were the battling hosts of a sane New Testament denominationalism. The lines were clearly drawn; the issue was unobscured and the great controversy took place upon an arena swept for action.

The net results of the last clash of debate and final shock of contending forces were: the church was definitely aligned with the Baptist General Convention of Texas—Burleson Col-

lege was immutably placed in the correlated school system of the State, and the relation between myself and church as pastor was forever severed. Some abler and more disinterested pen than my own should one day give the public a veracious and elaborate narrative of this unprecedented battle of principles.

Shortly after the close of my work at Greenville I was called to the church at Nacogdoches, away down in the redlands and piney woods of East Texas. Historic associations of unusual interest gather around the name and peoples of this old place. Here is the scene of one of the most romantic love adventures of General Houston. There is the oak under which the old General delivered his famous speech called "Another Roar from the Old Lion." In the densely shaded city cemetery is the monument perpetuating the memory of Jeremiah M. Rusk, Secretary of War in the cabinet of the Republic, and with Houston, one of the first senators in Congress of the new state of Texas. A little way out from town is the old Rusk residence, on the edge of the back porch, of which the great warrior and statesman, heartbroken over the dissolution of the Union and the secession of Texas, in a moment of irresponsible despondency took his own life by blowing out his brains with a shot gun. So weak and helpless are the strongest of men in the unlooked for hour of dissolving calamity.

The Baptists were relatively late in entering Nacogdoches, but when they did come it was with the swing of confidence and the tread of victory. Always had they been strong in the surrounding country. Old North Church, four miles north of the city, claims the honor of being the first non-Catholic organization in the Republic of Texas.

My inaugural as pastor was celebrated in the just finished new church building. No outstanding features characterized my quiet ministry here. The work was hard but the ingatherings justified the arduous toils of a nervously anxious man. The contrast between this and my former charge was refreshingly restful. The Baptist Church with a bound leaped to the fore. It was so far in advance of the other churches of the city that it had no rival. I held two good meetings with H. S. Wolfjohn, a Baptist of Hebrew blood, and a vocalist of unchallenged merit, leading the singing. The strong men of the community heard my preaching and supported my ministry. In the ad-

jacent country my labors were many. The summer excursions that I made to the country-side forged unbreakable bonds of countless friendships and cemented a fellowship with country preachers as lasting as love itself. Among those preachers were Rev. H. M. Hutson, Rev. J. E. Bullard, and Rev. J. A. Smith, now of Carthage, and Rev. W. T. McMullen, the Nestor of the Baptists of Angelina County, and Rev. S. F. Baucom, whose flaming zeal and unquenchable enthusiasm have long since made his name a household word with performing Texas Baptists.

Within a little more than a year in the midst of my Nacogdoches pastorate two crushing sorrows bore down upon my heart and home. I was called to Longview to see Earle, my baby brother, die. He was ever my peculiar pet, and the pathos of his fatherless state and his trustful confidence in me, and his almost idolatrous affection for me made him more like a son than a brother. The little fellow had just entered Baylor University, and was immediately infected with typhoid germ. When I reached his bedside the crisis had come and hope had fled. His mind was clear, he knew us all and could talk. Nerving myself for the ordeal I entered the death chamber and approached his side and said, "Earle, dear boy, do you remember the night in Paris at the tabernacle meeting when you professed faith in Christ and joined the church, and do you remember the next Sunday afternoon when I buried you in baptism in the pool of the West Paris Church? Does that profession and that ordinance hold good yet?" The parched lips opened and the dying boy said, "Yes," and then he turned on his side and was gone.

The next day we put him away under a mound of flowers in the beautiful Greenwood cemetery at Longview, and as the carriages turned to go I looked back, and the slanting rays of the setting sun shot through the flowers on that new made mound and lit all with flaming glory; and there came to my mind the epitaph the old Scotch teacher wrote for the tomb of the young scholar, "They shall bring the honor and the glory of the nations unto it."

This was one October, and the very next October death stalked into our own Nacogdoches home almost unannounced. Our third son and baby was Charles Edward, as handsome

and lovely a child as ever gladdened the hearts of father and mother. He was just twenty-two months old, an age of the most entrancing interest. He had the placid brow and blue eyes of his mother, and he was the joy of the house and the charm and delight of visitors. I can remember but two words that he ever spoke, on a country trip once he mimicked the bleating sheep, and I thought the feat so precocious and cute. One day he had a little cold. The stubbornness of the ailment was not detected, and no alarm was felt. I made a cross country trip to a Baptist association, and on coming home a glance at the baby in bed made me cast a look of frightened inquiry to the mother. She answered my mute question of agony by saying: "Yes, Charles is very sick, he has been getting worse ever since you left." Then I noticed that our physician, Dr. Tucker, was making very frequent calls. In a little while Dr. Tucker was bringing other doctors in consultation. Still later staunch friends and anxious neighbors began to drop in. Whispered dialogues, serious shaking of heads, soft and rapid footfalls upon the floors and baffled expressions upon the faces of doctors warned me to prepare for the inevitable. But I could not prepare. The shock was so sudden. The event so unexpected and the dread issue so undreamed of that I almost sank into a stupor of dumb despair. Before midnight the great enemy had won and the grim reaper had done his work. Little Charles was dead! Our baby was gone! And we were left stripped, heartbroken and desolate. As Oliver Cromwell said over the death of his son, even so I say: "It went to my heart like a dagger! Indeed, it did." I was amazed at my own weakness and dumb at my own inability to comfort the stricken mother.

Tender hands immediately dressed the little body, and some dear woman, thoughtful above the rest, put in the the fast stiffening and closing dimpled hand of the dead child a beautiful rose. This was clasped to his breast, and it carried to our *hearts* its message of hope. Along toward two o'clock in the morning loyal friends, young men, bore the casket in the stillness of that dead hour to the station and placed it upon the train. These friends were led by Thomas B. Lewis, Esq., now of Houston, Texas. He came all the way with us to Longview, and did not leave our side until the last sad rites were over. The journey was made by Shreveport, and every revolution of the

wheels ground the iron of sorrow into our hearts. I remember while awaiting the Texas train in the Louisiana city I saw the rain fall upon the box that held the form of my child, and my heart was hurt again. It hurts now and always will hurt until "death is swallowed up in Victory." At Longview relatives and other friends mingled their tears with ours. A measure of relief came to us when Dr. A. B. McCurdy, himself now these many years in glory, read the scriptures and spoke the words and offered the prayer that told of the life to come. But there was one more wrench. As the casket lid was being closed, the resurgence of grief swept in a passion over my dear wife, the mother of the child, and I never can forget the piercing poignancy of her words as she said, "I don't want them to take him away, I don't want them to take him away." I know some day the shadows will lift, and I shall see my baby again.

A year or so after the break-up of my Nacogdoches settlement I began what was to be my longest consecutive pastorate with the First Church at Monroe, Louisiana. There was no jar in the removal from one State to the other. Church life in both was remarkably similar and the proximity of the two commonwealths gave the citizens of each an opportunity to know the other. Volumes could be written upon my five and a quarter years in Monroe. Probably not in the history of modern Christendom has there been a more unique tumultuous, nor in some respects a more gloriously successful spiritual ministry. Monroe is a place of glaring contrasts. Ample wealth and dire poverty sat together on almost every block. Virtue and vice looked at each other across every street. Honor and knavery were together in all offices and public places. Since time immemorial the town has been notorious for three things: cotton gambling, poker playing and whiskey drinking. Morally and physically the atmosphere was heavy. Everywhere fetid smoke hung low over green tables. Moral sensibilities were blunted and spiritual discernment was blinded. The people lived on a low level of a debased fleshiness. I wrote up the town for the Baptist World some years ago in an article entitled "A Tale of Sin and a City." I shall not burden this volume with things then said.

With all the objections that could be raised against the town it was in many respects a fascinating place in which to live.

Cookery was reduced to a fine art and the pleasures of the table were universal and abundant. The social life of all that section was richer and fuller than anything of the kind I had ever known. Vital religion was just beginning to have its day when I arrived in the city. Hitherto the churches had been tolerated, now they had to be reckoned with. A self-assertiveness strange and incomprehensible to the old inhabitants was marking the activities and coloring the work of some of the more virile Christian bodies in the town. The Baptist Church worshiped in a beautiful frame structure on the finest corner in the city. This entire property was the gift over thirty years before of Mr. Hasley of Trenton, Louisiana. In the first year of my pastorate the church moved me out of the old inadequate parsonage into a commodious home that cost five thousand dollars.

All the years of my ministry here were crowded with labors varied and abundant. I preached against the crying evils of the day. I struck madly and defiantly, if not always wisely, at liquor, gambing and the social sin. Something was all the time buzzing around my head. Meantime the people crowded the church building and the baptismal waters were constantly troubled. I marvel now that I came out of those awful conflicts alive. Some wanted me killed and other men offered to do the bloody work. I was slandered, traduced, and spied upon, but in it all the Lord delivered me out of the hands of my enemies. And most of the old time leaders among my foes are now my friends. In December, 1917, it was my precious privilege to preach the dedicatory sermon for the debt-free $50,000 church edifice that stands in serviceable beauty on the spot where I preached so long. One of my successors, Dr. J. U. H. Wharton, inaugurated this building enterprise, and another, Dr. F. H. Farrington, completed the structure and led the congregation in offering it to the Lord clear of incumbrance.

Within a year or two of my settlement in Monroe my health began to decline. The church and congregation did everything possible for me. Vacations were ordered and I was sent upon trips from Cooper's Wells to a sea voyage. During my residence here two children were born. Our only girl and an additional boy.

When after five years the state of my health became truly

alarming, and the older children were mature enough to observe the hideous moral conditions of the city, I knew that there must be an immediate and radical change of location. Therefore, I encouraged the overtures of the First Church of Ruston and early one April I assumed the burden and accepted the leadership of Baptist affairs in the cultural center of the Louisiana hills. For some years the church at Ruston had been one of the leading Baptist congregations of the State, but in the near past it had fallen upon evil times. The old house of worship was not adequate to the needs of the growing city, nor commensurate with the worth and dignity of the church itself. The question of building involved the question of moving. And the latter question brought on all the debate, stubbornness, and logger-headedness that usually curse a church when once it has entered the field of uncontrolled controversy. Everybody wanted to erect a new temple of worship, but the voters were about evenly divided upon the location. North or South of the railroad, that was the question. Sentiment hardened around this one issue. Several good pastors had left the field in utter discouragement.

I came just about the end of the period of disintegration. The discussion had talked itself out. The fires had cooled, the embers were smouldering, and it seemed that there was no possibility of further conflagration. The leading spirits of the church assured me that my acceptance would be a signal for beginning the erection of a new building. So far as I could see things pointed that way. It seemed that the hour had struck and the moment was propitious. My predecessor had left thinking the question of location for the new church forever settled. He had succeeded in persuading the church to buy valuable property on the opposite side of the railroad, but he had overlooked the importance of selling the old property. That gave the stand-patters a rallying place, and it furnished the sentimentalists with all the tears they needed. Thus I found things and it seemed that the deadlock might remain and there would be another disrupted pastorate. Had it not been that the Presbyterian meeting house was accidently burned up by tramps who were without invitation making themselves at home there for the night, my Ruston ministry would not be a story worth the telling, but when the homeless Presbyterian congregation

made us an offer for our property, there was a quick acceptance. In conference one Sunday morning the necessary formalities were gone through and the deed was done.

Still the building proposition moved upon leaden feet. There was a sort of sullenness from the reaction of the fast transactions through which I had rushed the church, and it was apparent that the breaking ground for the new temple was many days off. I suffered many things for the lack of a permanent house of worship. I preached in every airdome, every theater, tent, and in every pastorless church that we could hire in the city. In not a single comfortable and beautiful auditorium was it ever my privilege to preach. We were homeless, constantly moving from pillar to post and never finding adequate accommodations or rest. I held a meeting in a half-tabernacle structure that netted the church exactly fifty candidates for baptism, one of these being my second son.

The suspense of building bore heavily upon me and doubt as to my ability to see our plans consummated brought on a recurrence of my old time invalidism. My strength was sapped, my confidence was waning, and my nerve was going.

Here our last child was born and for the first six months of his life the tragic illness of the baby almost cost the lives of his father and mother. Twice did our Sunday school superintendent dismiss the Sunday morning service because of the physician's belief that the pastor's baby was dying. Fourteen nights in succession I carried the suffering child in my arms the livelong night. But the Lord was gracious and the child lived and he is now a promising schoolboy nine years old.

At length subscriptions for funds for the new church building were started on a scale large enough to create confidence and inspire hope, and I had the deep satisfaction of seeing the basement walls of a new church rise from the excavation. Then I left and came back to Texas, but that is another story that will be told in chapters that follow.

CHAPTER XI

EVANGELISTIC WORK AT LARGE

I had always wanted to be an evangelist and in every pastorate I had done more outside work than was good for my home work. Everywhere my charges had complained of my frequent and long absences. I cannot say that the criticism was not just, but the temptation of change was too great for me, and I could not resist the insistent calls that came from every quarter. On retiring from the pastorate in Nacogdoches I had a full and fair chance to try out my evangelistic qualifications. No pastorate opened and I was forced to do the work of an evangelist. For more than a year I held meetings in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. During these months we made our home with Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Mobberly, the father and mother of my wife, at Longview. Here our son Joseph, now a lad sixteen years old, was born.

While I held some fairly successful meetings and made a support for my family, I do not think it was ever intended that I should startle the world by my evangelistic abilities. My engagements were mostly in the smaller places, and in these I had the happiest results and the best pay. After working as independent evangelist for more than a year, I was confirmed in the conviction that my sphere was to be a pastor and a pastor's helper. I do not think that I was a failure, but most certainly I was not a sensational success. I held meetings from Mineral Wells, Texas, to Welsh, Louisiana, and from Royce, Texas, to Crystal Springs, Mississippi. My first engagement was with Rev. John Mare at Lufton, Texas. This useful minister of Jesus Christ has long since been gathered to his fathers. Next I had a roaring meeting at Huntington in Angelina County, where there were many converts, a church organized, and where a building fund was raised. Rev. W. T. McMullen was then and is now the pastor of that prosperous congregation.

My career as evangelist broadened my horizon, widened my

fellowship, and greatly deepened my love for an enlarging circle of brethren. Therefore, when I reëntered the pastorate at Monroe, Louisiana, it was with the fervor of an evangelist. I held meetings without number in every part of the Pelican State. I preached from forty squares below Canal Stret, New Orleans, to within shouting distance of the Arkansas line. There is scarcely a parish in the State, the citizens of which can understand English, in which I have not tried to preach the gospel. I preached to the midnight shifts in the saw mills and to the indifferent mobs in the cities. I certainly was in labors abundant and in tears oft, and distresses of many kinds for the gospel's sake. I had every variety of experience to which mortal preacher may be heir, and withal many mountain top joys over countless souls coming home to God. While at Monroe I made a trip East to see my brother, going and returning by sea, and in Boston harbor I preached on the battleship Vermont; and aboard the Comus on the homeward bound voyage. I preached one Sunday in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico.

CHAPTER XII

THE COLLEGE OF MARSHALL

In November, 1910, I came back to Texas and settled as pastor of the First Baptist Church at Marshall. I was disposed for several reasons to return to the Lone Star State, but I did not want to locate so near the eastern border, and I had never been an admirer of Marshall, or of its churches, but when I saw the substantial old town spread out over its seven hills and manifesting evidences of continued growth, I was impressed with its importance as a preaching center. Town and country had been aroused to combat the evils of the liquor traffic and in a fiercely contested campaign the demon rum had been banished from the city and county, so I came to a saloonless city. A veritable passion of patriotism and rage for cleaner living had made the Prohibitionists victorious. However, I had no illusions about the place or the church. I knew the former was hard and reactionary, and that the latter was provincial and without vision, but my duty seemed clear and opportunity was inviting. I knuckled down to four years of the bitterest toil of my life. I soon discovered that the church did not want to do big things. It shrank from burdens, winced at hardships, and complained loudly when pressed by imperative duties. I saw that my church and the Christian community and the Baptists throughout that section must be torn from their narrow moorings and that their static condition would have to be utterly broken up. To do this there must be a gigantic task and a tremendous appeal. The spiritual and intellectual inertia had to be completely shattered. In a way most splendidly practical and beautifully providential the means of accomplishing my desires and achieving my high purposes came to hand.

There was a whirlwind campaign on for Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. On an appointed Sunday a party of eminent churchmen visited Marshall and raised several

thousands of dollars from the Methodists of the city. So pleased were all concerned at the results of the financial appeal that on Monday night a banquet was given the contributors in the basement of the First Methodist Church. I was one of a number of invited guests. The occasion was one of rare good feeling among our Methodist brethren. Their leading men felicitated each other, praised the educational work of the church, and said not a little concerning the majesty of Dallas and the wealth of central Texas. When called upon to speak I most warmly congratulated my Methodist brethren upon the unparalelled feat of such quick and effective establishment of so great an institution as their new university. Then I turned to sing the praises of my own town. I told of its population, wealth, vast surrounding area of backward country and the unbelievable distance to higher institutions of learning, and wound up by challenging the Methodists or Presbyterians to make no mean educational coup by planting one of their colleges in Marshall. As I sat down the gentleman at my right, Mr. M. Turney, a capitalist, promoter and withal a leading Methodist, said: "If you will build a Baptist college here I will give you the first thousand dollars." That proposition put ideas into my head. More thoughts about the school came to me, for as I walked home at midnight Mr. P. G. Whaley, another eminent Methodist, said to me, "Build that school and we'll give you the next thousand dollars."

From that moment the thing would not down and I had no rest. It filled my thoughts while waking and my dreams while sleeping. I trembled in delicious expectancy of the realization of a purpose and a vision formed when I was a tow-headed, barefoot boy. Immediately I began the search for a college site. I knew that we must have lots of land, enough for all school purposes and much that we could plot into lots and sell to procure money with which to build the school. Returning one day with Deacon W. A. Harvey from looking at a prospective site, we stopped in the edge of an oak grove and let our vision sweep through the trees and rest upon the crest of a noble hill. My observation was: "The Lord made this for a college. We must have this land."

To which Mr. Harvey replied: "I'm afraid you cannot get it. This is the Van Zandt estate and contains a hundred and

forty acres. The heirs all live in Fort Worth, and I am told that they will not consider selling a part of this property. The purchaser must buy it all."

From this time on my counsellors were Mr. M. Turney and M. P. McGee, Esq. Mr. Turney furnished the money and the financial advice, and Mr. McGee the nerve force, the optimism, boundless zeal, and technical legal knowledge that was necessary every day and every hour in the long negotiations. The three of us now centered our thoughts and contributed our time almost without reserve to this college proposition in the practicability of which none believed but us.

On Thanksgiving night Mr. Turney and Mr. McGee came to my house and advised me to leave on the late night train for Fort Worth, to consult with General Van Zandt with regard to the acquisition of the property we needed. Mr. McGee gave the first actual cash ever contributed to the college. The amount was a ten dollar bill to help defray my expenses to Fort Worth. My wife added to that fund by letting me have part of a marriage fee that I had made that day, and turned over to her. My visit to Fort Worth opened the question of sale and later in the winter Major Jarvis and his wife, other heirs, came to Marshall and made me a definite proposition. They offered me one hundred acres, the choicest and best located part of the estate, for $25,000, one third cash, balance due in one year at eight per cent interest. This proposition was quickly accepted.

The money for the first payment was borrowed from Mr. Turney's bank and notes were executed for deferred payments. The land was surveyed and fifty acres in the center of the tract was sacredly set apart for specific college purposes. This is the size of the campus. The remainder was cut up into lots and put upon the market. Mr. W. A. Harvey purchased the first and the highest priced lot. We soon sold enough lots to pay the indebtedness on the land. Then there was a great lot sale put on, running up above $40,000 worth to get cash in hand with which to build. Later there was a campaign for voluntary contributions from the citizens, the aggregate of this subscription being $47,000. Two years later still, the citizens of Marshall gave $25,000 cash toward the erection of one of the new dormitories. The physical property of the school as it now stands consists of a fifty-acre campus, three brick buildings,

and three frame structures, and a leased large house, used as a girls' co-operative club.

The original holding board of trustees was composed of Messrs. E. Key, M. Turney, M. P. McGee, E. L. Wells and myself. I was the only active Baptist on the board. Mr. Wells was president of the City School Board, and in church affiliation he was an Episcopalian. He was an inspiring supporter, a gentleman of the old school, whose radiant faith in the potentialities of our dream kept us in good hope. The city of Marshall responded to our every appeal with alacrity and unprecedented generosity. From the start the town adopted the school as its very own. In all the distracting commotions of municipal jealousies and antagonisms, the school idea and fact have been the one unifying agency. The college has been the rallying center of the energies of the people and the chosen object of their benefactions. The other denominations and the non-Christian portion of our population were far more enthusiastic for the school than were the Baptists at first. Others had more faith in us than we had in ourselves.

But many pains shall afflict him who is a dreamer of dreams and builder of schools. Only the seer knows with what leaden feet reforms do move and only the creator of a new thing can properly feel the awful pull of the backward surge of an unaroused peoples' indifference.

I remained in the pastorate and held on to my pulpit for the power these positions would give me as I pushed the school enterprise. But for two years I did not dare mention the college from my pulpit. I knew that public talk from the rostrum would bring on a violently unfavorable reaction among the Baptists. Therefore, I let the leaven work without and from the outside life coals were finally put upon creeping Baptist's backs. In time the church did respond nobly to the appeal and did rally heroically to the enterprise.

For two years I fought shy of the Baptist newspapers and I had a care as to what I wrote to the denominational press. Our people were overburdened with small, badly located struggling schools, some of them just gasping for breath. The leaders did not want any more crying babies on their hands, nor were they anxious to furnish crutches to any more limping schools. As fugitive scraps of news would filter out of Mar-

shall to denominational headquarters, low rumblings of dissent would be heard. More than once lines like this appeared in the Baptist Standard, "Let no over-zealous brother start an independent school or college." This kept up for a year or two. I had a letter from Secretary Barton of the Educational Board and from Dr. J. M. Carroll, then of Oklahoma, asking if rumors about a new college at Marshall were veracious. Those editorials and letters and warnings have not been answered yet. I could not reply without disclosing my plans and these plans would have been regarded as highly chimerical by all who did not see what I saw and feel what I felt. When the hour should strike I meant to reveal all and this I was able to do in perfect time on the stroke of the clock.

But leadership is a lonely and heart-breaking isolation. I was regarded as a half madman whose wild imagination had got the better of him. After talking an hour one day to a Baptist pastor, explaining to him the grandeur of the conception and flamingly rhapsodizing over the practical aspects of the whole scheme, his only answer was, "I shall not put any obstacles in your way." And at what I considered an auspicious moment I unfolded the whole idea to the Executive Board of our association. These good men sat unresponsive, inarticulate, and dumb to my astounding revelation. Ere this, however, all have been converted and all are friends of the institution on the hill.

Mr. Thurman C. Gardner, now B. Y. P. U. secretary of Texas, was the first president. There was not a brick on the hill when he took charge. His office was the position of money-gathering, promoting and advertising. He did his work well, erected the main building, and sounded the name of the College of Marshall to the corners of the farthest country. Under the presidency of Dr. H. E. Watters the school opened with a large attendance and great expectancy. At the end of the first school year Dr. Watters left for Union University and Dr. John S. Humphreys became president. The college is now on the last lap of the second year. It has survived the war, devastating droughts, crushing reversals, and ravaging epidemics. It now belongs to the Baptists of the entire State. Its destiny is what they shall elect to make it. A superior faculty has been employed and organized and the future seems as bright as the promise of God. It should stay here with its ever-deepening

services and widening ministries to the hungry-minded youth of East Texas until the Master comes.

Dr. Truett calls the College of Marshall the romance of religion. It would be unjust to true historicity and outrageously offensive to my own final feelings were I not to here record the distinguished services of Education Secretary A. J. Barton in bringing to fruition the deep-laid plans of local leaders. With wonderful self-poise, marvelous sagacity, and a splendid mastery of a great situation, Dr. Barton remained in Marshall for weeks and made the school triumph over every obstacle. The big men of Marshall to this day regard Dr. Barton as the greatest living Baptist leader.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PERSONAL EQUATION IN MY PREACHING

If to properly analyze the qualifications and evaluate the mental and spiritual worth of another be a work of wisdom, then a just appraisment of one's self is the task of genius. The manner and content of my preaching were different from the vast majority of other ministers, if not better. I may have been too original. I had to pick up my training and dig out my matter. The first baptistry in a church I ever saw I used it and the first associational gathering I ever looked upon, my church was host to the body. I learned church procedure as best I could by reading, observing, hearing. Proper pulpit manners I had to acquire and I had to school myself severely in the manner of public address. There were many excrescences that should have been toned down by expert training, and there were many deep defects that should have been exorcised by the merciless surgery of capable criticism. But I evidently possessed some elements of strength that might have been weakened by a too technical course of training. The papers and ardent admirers did sometimes say that I possessed a vigor, a dash, and a command of English, and a pulpit poise, that were the joy of my friends and the despair of my rivals. I make no comment upon the above, but simply record it in passing.

At times my style of delivery was so furiously forensic that many of my auditors thought me too belligerent. The torrential outbursts were the eruptions of my long pent-up Gallic passion. My French impetuosity rushed me into the fine frenzy of the oratory of high abandon. In these onsets of unusual verbal fierceness my purpose was to annihilate the evil I was attacking. There were, indeed, in my charges and assaults intimations of real warfare and imitations of genuine battle. I thought it my business to demolish every obstruction of the truth. I considered it my province to strike at the head of every error. I thought that by sleepless vigilance and oft-re-

peated sledge hammer blows I might in a decade or two spy out all sin and eradicate evil from the earth. Therefore, I charged and counter charged.

Let me not convey the impression here that I was a truculent theological combatant, seeking controversy and ever dying for dispute. I was not. My startling outbursts and aggressive deliverances against certain flagrant sins and devitalizing doctrines were the exceptions and not the rule in my preaching. But the people will judge a public man by those attributes they see in him which most please or irritate them. Therefore, despite the pleading tones in my voice and the witchery of winsome words which I tried to cultivate, I was all too often loked upon as a storm-tossed battling man who knew not the tenderer side of peoples or gospels.

Another fruitful source of trouble to me and ground for disappointment upon the part of the people in me was the high expectation aroused by my fiery discourses. When I went to a new pastorate the people listened with ecstasy and sat down in contentment, fully believing that the whole town would rush into our church because of my ministry. They thought, too, that the finances would take care of themselves and they impatiently awaited the miracle that never came. I was ever the victim of the high hopes I had inspired. Thus often my best preaching undid me. The psychology of this is understandable to him who thinks.

Visiting I always abominated. I mean the regular routine of calling from house to house. To this day I do not see the religion or wisdom of it. I drove myself to the task, however, and for fifteen or twenty years I did more visiting than any pastor I knew. It was a privilege to minister to the poor, to the stranger, the distressed, the sick and the dying. Upon these classes I freely expended my bodily strength and poured out my heart's best affections in liquid love. The unconverted were my especial care and the unchurched men who labored in store, shop and office, counting-house and factory, received my pastoral care and kindliest attentions. But I did resent most emphatically being nagged about general visiting. The idea is prevalent among church people almost universally that the pastor should call upon his women parishioners in their homes at oft-repeated times during the year. Where and when this

custom arose and what the idea back of it, I do not know. But I do know that the chief pastor of a modern church cannot meet these puerile demands. Many is the time I have called upon supposedly sick people who were not half so ill as I, or members of my family, whom I had left uncared for at home. Zealous members have prevailed upon me to neglect pressingly important duties and hurry to homes where was rumored an illness. Again and again I have arrived at such places to find the sick person well and pursuing his usual vocations.

There is a ridiculous side to it, too, for a man of sensibility and pride. What a spectacle it is for passers-by to see a pastor frantically ringing a door-bell or pounding his knckles blue against the door of a house where no one will answer. It brings over the dominie a feeling of idiocy hard to endure.

I was never a man of affairs in the pastorate; that is, I was no business manager, and I had no great organizing ability nor facility of administration. Mine was the mission of an inspirer. Sordid details were beyond me, and the application of the principles I preached had to be made by the hearer. Whenever I had men of vision, responsiveness and executive ability, my church work went forward with a bound. But where vision failed and mental lethargy prevailed the wheels of Zion dragged and I esteemed my work a failure. I could only point out the way, direct the march, and shout the word of encouragement in tones that thrilled redeemed souls. It was never mine to degrade my ministry and debase my calling by looking after tables. I have the indubitable proof from all over the land where I preached that men and women, moved by the high Gospel Word have gotten under the burdens of the churches in a heroic manner and have nobly underwritten all the agencies of the kingdom. This is compensation sufficient to atone for my personal limitations in matters of detail.

I think that I should never have been pastor in a small place. My consuming zeal too quickly burned over a village and my restless soul clamored for change and when my audience was the same, the pressure I put upon it was too insistent and too hard for a small community to bear. Mine was a message for the throngs and for the Bedouin tribes that tramped thru the larger places, stopping at each but for a moment to pray and hear, and then hurrying on with flying feet to translate into

action and transmute into life the messages they had heard. So convinced was one of the most discerning friends I ever had that he told me in great love that I should not stay at any church more than fifteen months. He was kind enough to say that the character of ministry I gave should be passed around, that it was my mission to strike the high places and sound the lofty note of the loud bugle call for advancement, and that it was an injustice both to the churches and myself for me to remain long at one place. Passing over the implied compliments, I believe there was large wisdom in the good brother's observations.

I have always magnified my ministry and gloried in the Gospel of Christ. I never could conceive a call as the narrowed invitation to serve just a church only. I always felt that my calls were to the city and the entire community. I find that Paul had this opinion. He speaks of his mission to Rome, to Ephesus, to Thesolonica, and Corinth. I never could confine my efforts to the Baptist Church of which I was supposed to be the bishop. I held my commission in holier fear and in vaster perspective. I regarded myself as the accredited ambassador of Jesus Christ to all within the bounds of my diocese. This conception is inimical to the ideas and prejudices of many churches. Not a few of my pastorates were offended at my attitude and self-appointed leaders without number have combated the broader view I entertained, but ever pursued the course of my conviction as indicated above, and in not a single instance have the results other than justified my judgment and actions.

The comic is not absent in the pastoral history of a positive man. Sometimes there is engendered among parishioners the insanest jealousy against the performing preacher. In one place a lawyer member of the church became bitterly envious of me and my reputation as if I had been his successful rival at the bar. A tribute to my talents from a non-Baptist townsman would turn this man green with rage.

Always have I felt that personality was the preacher's noblest prerogative. If he cannot so stress his redeemed manhood as to make a lastingly emphatic impress upon his hearers, he is without doubt an ecclesiastical failure. If the preacher cannot so project himself into the lives of his men and women

as to insure thru them the deathless persistency of the moral and religious principle, Ichabod is written over his name. The virtue must go out of him to his people and thus Kingdom leaders will be grown, givers will be developed, missionaries will be found, called, and sent; teachers and evangelists will be discovered, and the immortal principle of the divinely implanted life upon a personality strong, unyielding, and conqueringly progressive will perpetuate itself in those who hear and will find its sweetest reward in the hardest service and the most quickening sacrifice. If there shall be any reward for me in the realm beyond the starlit dome, it shall be because I have been an inspirer.

CHAPTER XIV

MINISTERIAL MISTAKES

With only a modicum of courage and a faint trace of intellectual honesty, a chronicler might fill volumes on his own mistakes and shortcomings. Mistakes with the best of us are so numerous that there is no surprise at their confession and no upheaval caused by their recital. I speak here only of the larger errors of my ministry. My first and greatest mistake was doubtless one of sermonic thought and deliverance. I probably attempted an ornateness that was not appreciated or needed by the vast majority of people who heard me. Then my discourses were directed primarily to the heads of my audiences. I should have shot lower, for probably they had hearts. It is a fatal mistake for a speaker to assume that his auditors are in his class in things of which he is master and they are not. The public speaker must be an authority when he dares come with prepared address before the people. They have to be awakened, aroused, interested. No crowd for long can be kept upon a high level of lofty thinking and solemn moral endeavor. Even the intellectuals in an audience will fall to the level of the masses and there will soon be a common mental ground. Then the most exquisitely cultivated like to unbend and they do dearly love to be relieved of the labor of hard thinking and the stress of sustained reasoning. I have seen the simplest stories based on the commonest background wake gale after gale of laughter and round after round of applause in the Southern Baptist Convention, and in the Texas Baptist Convention. The learned and dignified messengers enjoyed the convulsions of laughing irresponsibility. That speaker is a success who can make the people laugh and weep. Tears and laughter show that the elemental forces of a soul have been broken up and there is no going behind the fact of the power of him who can play readily upon the first chords.

My second serious mistake was an internal and social one.

Always have I been possessed of a rage for the society of those I had reason to love, and I was inordinately fond of the pleasures of the table. I liked to go to dinners and still more did I like to give dinners. I rarely declined an invitation to dine out since that gave me an opportunity to come in contact with each member of the family and the friends of the household. At the homes of the very modest poor I have made my own engagements for meals. I did this to reach working men and boys who were at enmity toward the church and evidently dodging me. Not a little cornbread and bacon have I eaten on such occasions to the glory of God. The result in nearly all cases amply justified the audaciousness of the scheme.

But reciprocity was my rule and practice. From the very beginning the people have come across the parsonage threshold in a continuous stream. Christian workers at large, denominational agents, country preachers, and God's poor who were without the price of a meal were, of course, ever made welcome to the best we had. Then I did my best to capture and entertain the celebrities who came to town. I did this for the joy of their companionship and for the effect their uplifting personalities might have upon my family. That was an exacting and an expensive sort of hospitality. Last of all, we kept open house day and night to our parishioners and local friends. Scarcely did we ever sit down to a meal that we did not have a table guest from the very vicinage of the parsonage. Every order, organization, and unit of the church we honored by receptions, always followed by refreshments. A turkey dinner was the annual feast prepared for the deacons and their wives. At less formal meetings of the deacons the collations were substantial, but more modest. My good wife, who is very conservative in utterance, says that we have averaged a guest at every meal since we have been keeping house. And she has often half-humorously and half-vexedly remarked that I must have gone down with a shotgun and have compelled some nomadic Baptist to accompany me home to dinner, for, surely, in no other way could I have had diners with such unfailing regularity.

This course of mind had its favorable side and there were many compensatory results, but on the whole that line of pastoral procedure was a colossal blunder. It destroyed the privacy of the home, made my overworked wife a slave to the

appetites and caprices of guests, emptied the family larder, and drained the preacher exchequer. The gains were too inconsequential for such substantial outlay. While I revelled in the rôle of host, my wife toiled in the kitchen, and guests, filled to satiety with appetizing viands, too often lightly discounted the work of the pastor's wife and on leaving the table forgot the church.

Let me set it down here as my opinion that it is a mistake for a minister to live next door to his meeting-house. The manse should be a comfortable distance from the church so that the residence might be a real home and not a free hotel conducted by the pastor's wife.

My third and fatallest and most irretrievable blunder related entirely to money. This came by inheritance, by example, and by training. So far back as I can trace my ancestry, there is not on either side of my house a single forebear who had three grains of financial sense. I say this with becoming reverence and with all due filial piety, but it is a fact of such magnitude for untold harm in the entire race, that truth compels me to record it here. Few dollars, indeed, did I ever possess when I was a boy on the farm and I thought these were made to spend so soon or before they were earned. I could have a great day in town on half a dollar and sometimes I made it through with a quarter. The value and power of money were never taught us. We handled too little of coin and currency to be enamored of the magic of its worth. As a usual thing we saw money but once a year at harvest time in the fall when the cotton was gathered and marketed. The marts of trade were far removed from our humble abode, and so in the home there was little occasion and probably less disposition to instruct the children in the intricate mazes of financial affairs.

The preachers scouted the idea of accumulating money and giving attention to what they called worldly things. When we went to high school and college we met the same frigid atmosphere of affected contempt and disrespect for gold. Economics had not been properly correlated with our school systems. Everywhere the warning was shouted into our ears that we must beware of the lust for gain and treat with lofty disdain the circulating medium of the realm and everything that represented property. This long indoctrination of false teaching has

brought me many pains through the years, and borne much bitter fruit in the garden of my ministry. I never was able to completely face about and rectify the false trend given me in the beginning. The early twig was bent and so the tree did grow.

Humiliating embarrassments have crowded upon me at every turn in the stony pilgrimage of my upward climb. I thought it beneath my heavenly calling to bargain with churches over salaries. I never in my life set a figure or made a monetary demand. I took what was offered me and received it when it was collected, sometimes long overdue. I bore in my own body the complaints of creditors and their cold-blooded business exactions. I never did get money enough to come clear with my living expenses. I was always paying out, but never able to entirely overcome the incubus of debt. I had never lived in a commodious and attractive parsonage unless I built it or led the church in buying it, and of all my pastorates, but one ever increased my salary. My active ministry was at an unfortunate period in denominational development. The churches were outgrowing the old order and were struggling to adjust themselves to the new. The financial was the last and most difficult phase of the ecclesiastical transition. Everywhere I went, disintegration had set in, and I was usually too impatient to await a time of settling and the new day. Therefore, I was always preaching to churches that were in the formative period. I rarely reaped the benefits of my own labors or those of my predecessors. Mine was the solitude of the pioneer. I wrought not often on another man's salvation. Sometimes I tore down with the fury of an iconoclast in order to clear the ground for the kind of structure I hoped to erect.

I conclude this chapter by expressing the opinion that there should be a school of business for preachers in all our colleges, and that the economic side of the ministry should receive due stress in our seminaries and theological institutions. Shorn of economic independence, the pastor is an unspeakable slave and a mendicant without the dignity of membership in the order of the begging friars. The churches must be taught their duty and their responsibility, for have we not all heard Dr. Gambrell tell the story how the old Mississippi deacon in his prayer said: "Lord, keep our pastor humble. We keep him poor."

CHAPTER XV

PUBLIC ISSUES AND PLATFORM COMBATS

Ever since the lyceum course at Hineman University School, Monticello, I had longed to be a lecturer. The freedom of the platform appealed to me, and the applause of enraptured audiences was sweet to my vaulting ambitious soul. Not a few times during my school days did I try my powers upon school, church and court-house platform. I went out of town surreptitiously with a look of far away importance on my face and, according to my reception, returned beamingly radiant or unmistakable crest-fallen. I have these last few days received a letter from a country school superintendent in far Western Texas, telling me that he heard me in an Arkansas mountain town over twenty-five years ago. I was sent out to represent the college president, and this Texas educator is one of a number of mountain boys who heard me. I never knew of his existence until his letter came. The young undergraduate's address surely was not in vain if it created leaders of light and learning for Texas plainsmen.

I was hardly settled in my Longview pastorate before I was out on the road, filling speaking engagements at the smaller places. I first assayed to trace the life of Christ by the lines of a chart, but this was foreign to my method of address and I soon exchanged the map for high-sounding titles at the head of my extemporaneous lectures. As opportunity offered, I carried my messages to surrounding communities, going as far afield as from Carthage to Big Sandy. The expenses of my itinerary were borne by voluntary contributions at the close of the speech. I believe these always met my traveling outlay, but there was not much additional left for an honorarium. I think six dollars was the maximum offering I received, but the traveling was good, the fellowship was fine, and the experience was educational to a degree.

I remember about this time fulminating against the Cath-

olics, and hurling anathemas against the saloon, this latter from my own pulpit. Later high schools and colleges so besieged me with invitations for special speeches and commencement addresses that all my desires in this line were more than gratified. My circuit extended over nearly all Texas and my taste was so democratic that I went with marvelous facility from the largest to the smallest places and vice versa. My church at Paris starred me in a pay lecture. This was the first time that I ever had real tickets sold for hard money. My theme was, "Shall we Fight?" having to do with the imminency of war with Spain. I strongly urged that we take the initiative in the outbreak of hostilities. My audience was in warmest sympathy and heartiest accord with all I said; and so soon as news of my attitude got to the public thru the papers, the Congress declared war on Spain! This was probably the most dynamic international deliverance that ever fell from my lips!

After going to Louisiana I became the protagonist of every variety of subjects for the commonweal. I campaigned for local school taxes and I precipitated a prohibition contest, the bitterest and most dangerous I have ever known, which culminated only last year in a victory for the forces of righteousness. Under local superintendents and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, I was tirelessly engaged in tax campaigns throughout the hill section, and the State Superintendent was kind enough to say that I never lost in an election. While at Ruston I revived my pay-as-you-enter lecture scheme. In my old pastorate at Monroe my new offering on "Democracy and Leadership" was graciously received by an audience of flattering size and a monetary response that should satisfy the unspoiled desires of a normal man of provincial fame. Then the educational institutions of the State called upon me and I spoke in the chapel of colleges from Ruston to the Gulf. Before leaving the State my last engagement was with the Normal at Natchitoches, where the now widely-known Congressman Aswell was then president.

When on coming back to Texas my lyceum star dimmed and hung low in the firmament. So exhausting and arduous was my pastoral toil that I had neither time nor strength for the noblest fancies and the highest flights. I bore burdens like a pack-horse and wallowed in the bogs of unrequited toil like

an ox, and never again did my imagination take wings, nor did my stage oratory again blaze into glory until the conflagration of the world war broke my heart and set on fire my tongue.

One amusing weakness that I was never often permitted to indulge will excite the risibles and bring laughter to the lips of my readers. The dearest wish of my vain heart was to appear upon the stage in the evening in full dress. Of course, I could not do this in the church, and my scissor-tale coat and acre of shirt front had to be reserved for secular institutions. While speaking in Ruston there was great uneasiness on the part of my wife and watchful friends in the audience. In all the redolence and pride of a borrowed dress suit I was laboring in many difficulties in the midst of my lecture when, lo, my handkerchief began to slip from its moorings under the vest. Loved ones in watchful waiting thought my shirt was coming out and their consternation can be better imagined than described.

CHAPTER XVI

MY MOTHER

My mother was a Vaughan and was born seventy-three years ago on the Warrior River in Alabama. She was the eldest of three children, and was brought up by her father, her mother having died when the children were very small. My mother does not remember her mother. My grandfather evidently was a man of dignity, fair education, good property, and a heart of great tenderness for his children. The family was not rich, but in comfortable circumstances. The land-holdings were not unduly large, and the number of negro slaves was limited to the needs of a small but paying plantation. The best educational advantages of the day and the locality were given my mother, her sister and brother. I have an idea that my grandfather taught the children himself, and then employed tutors and governesses. Somehow he succeeded in inculcating into his children the hardier rudiments of learning, and he must have instilled into their hearts at a very early age the most impressive lessons of honor to parents, reverence for age, and sympathy for affliction. One of the strong outstanding characteristics of my mother has been her idolatrous devotion to the memory of her father. Though I never saw him, through her I know him. The aged, too, have been her special care. She has consistently through a long life risen up before the hoary head and honored the face of the old man. She has been, too, the self-appointed attorney of the outcast and the poor. In her the veriest white trash had a staunch friend and a brave defender.

What of my grandfather's property was left by the war was dissipated or utterly destroyed in the wreckless ravages of reconstruction. Like ten thousand other householders, my aged grandfather sat around his desolate fireside, surrounded by his needy children and looked intently into the dead ashes of his hopes. As has been set forth in the first chapter of this book,

when a young woman, my mother married my father, a middle-aged widower with grown children. Conditions in that part of the South then were deplorably bad. Nearly everything worth having had gone up in the flame of war, or was having the life tramped out of it by the dominance of the black hordes of irresponsible freedmen.

There was nothing for self-respecting poor whites to do but move. My father with his older family and new wife was constantly on the go. Not a few communities in Alabama claimed them as citizens and probably more in Mississippi. They lived and labored and suffered in every section of the two states. Reverses, financial and industrial, met them at every hand. Moving upon unimproved places and turning the new soil undermined the health of the entire family. Sixteen years ago I held a meeting on Lake Roe Buck in the Mississippi Delta, where more than thirty years before my mother had had typhus fever.

My mother was a small, dark woman, with remarkable recuperative powers. She gave birth to six sons. I am the second. I remember only the picture and the grave of my oldest little brother. Only three of the boys are living now, myself, Lieutenant-Commander W. B. Tardy, United States Navy, and Percy Tardy, a railroad man at Bryan, Texas. Stanley Tardy, the fifth boy, a young physician in Shelby County, died suddenly some years ago. I traveled all Saturday night and Sunday on the train from Monroe, La., and then some miles by hack to reach the place of interment in time for the funeral. I just did arrive in time to look upon his face before the last words were said. It was a heart-breaking trip, and I was the lone relative of my dead brother at that strange graveyard.

My mother was a Baptist of the old school. She believed in a heart change so radically vital as to be almost cataclysmic. She wanted full repentance, complete surrender, and undimmed spiritual illumination. How well I remember her face as she listened to the sermons and joined in the devotions at the country church. It was one alternating picture of tearful contrition and soul radiance. Her voice had in song a haunting sweetness that brings to my heart calm and peace and blessing to this day. Her prayer life at home was constant. She slipped to some part of the dwelling, or place, every day where

she communed alone with her Lord—"and faith she did need it." What with the hurly-burly of farm life, the rough pioneering of the backwoods, the clashing interests of double families under one roof, and the petulant cries of five growing boys, a place where the Lord was wont to meet his petitioner was the supreme need of my worn, distracted mother.

She, too, had problems of her own. She was not a placid, submissive creature. How could she be? Surely, the mother of six boys must have a good deal of the lion in her, but she fought bravely and faithfully to put the good in the ascendency. She watched over her boys with ceaseless vigilance. Her ambition for them knew no bounds and her love was limitless and her sacrifices in their interests she counted a joy. In many respects I have never known such a woman. She had the most capacious mind for the names of persons I have ever met in my life. She was a quick and intent listener, an alert observer, and the most voracious feminine reader that ever conned the printed page. Had my mother been a man in war time she would have been a general, and in peace a governor. To this day she is an authority on personnel, from the days of her girlhood on the Black Warrior River in Alabama to the last city ward in which she has lived in Texas.

But, oh! the pathos of her life! Always did she want a permanent earthly home, but never had one. She would have dearly loved to be settled, but it was her fate to live all over four different states. She was pushed or dragged from pillar to post all her married life, and after the death of her husband, twenty-five years ago, the peregrinations continued. And troubles have closed in upon her with remorseless grip. Her brother and sister are long since dead and three of her boys have been gone these many years, and for five years this writer has been an incurable invalid. Ten years ago she fell and broke her hip and for this decade has walked perilously on crutches.

Tho a small and frail woman and tho of the intellectual type, my mother has done every sort of manual labor that falls to the lot of the hungry poor in the remotest regions. She has hoed corn and chopped cotton and picked cotton with her little boys when they were too small to understand the dire necessity of sticking at the toil of the fields. She has washed and scrubbed and starched and ironed and sewed and mended and

carded and knitted and spun and most of the time in health so indifferent as to involve the gravest physical hazard.

Times without number when I thought myself abused and imposed upon by my father and other members of the family, I meditated running away from home. Clothes would be secreted and boyish plans of immaturity formed, but at night the white face and pleading look of my mother would visit me in my dreams and in the morning thoughts of fleeing had vanished. My mother still abides in my humble rented house. Her hair has long since been as white as the driven snow, her hands are twisted, and her face is wrinkled. I believe she has lived this last half dozen years just to help take care of me. Her knotted hands are smooth and gentle as they tenderly touch my aching brow and with unexampled patience and a strength born of love unfathomable, she has tried, oh, so hard, to rub the pain out of my spine. I know that each night as she gives me the farewell kiss and goes sadly to her room that she has the dread fear that she will never see me alive again. But, surely, she has served her day and generation well, both in her own personal endeavors and thru her, her children in church and State, and, oh! the hundreds she has taught in Sunday school in country, town and city.

This poor tribute to her who bore me, nourished me, and loved me to the end, I write for the book that tells the tale of my own unworthy life. It will not be long, it cannot be long before her Savior will come to claim his own. She has ever been fond of singing,

> "Even down to old age all my people shall prove,
> My sovereign eternal unchangeable love."

My hope in Him is that beyond Jordan's parting waters, mother and I shall both be made whole.

CHAPTER XVII

THE WONDER WOMAN—MY WIFE

She has been mine for nearly a quarter of a century. I found her at Longview twenty-four years ago, when I entered upon the pleasant pastorate of the Baptist Church in that city. I saw her for the first time teaching a Sunday school class of girls up behind the organ. She was dressed in purest white, and that vision of entrancing loveliness lingers with me to this hour. When once in love my courtship was almost barbarously aggressive. I clamored, argued, and pleaded for my prize. It seemed that the answer was cruelly delayed. Months of waiting were like years to me. She was the daughter of Colonel and Mrs. James M. Mobberly, originally of Davies County, Kentucky. My wife was the eldest of seven girls, her name was Daisy, and she was brought up at Longview and educated at Potter College, Bowling Green, Kentucky. She was strong in mind, commanding in her native dignity, improved by training, sweet in character, lovely in disposition, and beautiful in person. On the night of our wedding my chief groomsman told me before I had been permitted to see the veiled bride that she was the prettiest woman he had ever beheld.

Contrary to the usual experience, my marriage strengthened me in my pastorate. The woman I had won was of character so high and of superiority so universally recognized that there were no petty jealousies about my marriage nor criticism of my choice. It seemed to be the one thing to do and it was so apropos that in one chorus of praise the people acclaimed me most fortunate. My love was ever of the blood-red rose type. From my earliest recollection I have lived in a realm of romance; always some day did I expect to have a beautiful bride. The nethermost heat of a Gallic temperament, when set on fire with passion's deathless flame, is not always pleasant companionship in the home. The too fervid lover is often unreasonably exacting and his demands may

degenerate into basest selfishness. To my jerky and persistent romanticism and furious frenzy of life's young love, there was as an offset my wife's calm imperturbability. A thousand times has she saved the day by her unruffled placidity.

From the start our pace together has been most rapid and always have we had a hard time, but the saints and the world never knew it, for together we smiled at obstacles and with the inexhaustible resiliency of morning's glad strength we laughed away the Gorgon monster that crouched in our path. Children large and numerous were born unto us. For fifteen years, spaced about two years apart, the babies came, until there had been born six boys and one girl, all yet living except the little fellow about whose death I have written in another place. Can any fond husband ever forget the cries of young motherhood? White and half-crazed, he is forever afterwards a changed man. My wife never rhapsodized over children and never sentimentalized about wanting babies, but she has made the sanest, steadiest, and most resourceful mother of my knowledge; and though she candidly admitted when pressed that she was not anxious for the pains of motherhood, she has borne the birth agony of all our children heroically and uncomplainingly. So much for the contrasts in desire and doing.

My wife was a lover of home and her dearest wish was for a lifetime habitation in some congenial place. This was never to be. We moved and moved and moved. Without upbraiding or loud bemoaning our fate, she lovingly followed me from town to town and church to church and house to house. Our wedding furniture was bruised and broken and our bridal gifts were smashed in transit. The little things that are so precious to a woman's heart have nearly all been destroyed or lost. The delicate reminders of maidenhood and the sweet mementos of girlish beauty and innocence have been ruthlessly consumed in life's fiery holocaust. She has been my pilot when I was on a ship where two seas came together. She has warned me off the treacherous rocks and has pointed my eye to the polar star and ever been the first to give the glad cry of land ahead. She has never upbraided me for my costly financial errors, nor has she chided me over the hugest ecclesiastical shortcomings. Her low, broad brow and tender blue eyes have turned to me alway with restful welcome and calm confidence. These virtues were

forged in fierce heat and these graces flowered in a scorching school. What a patient hearing she gave my sermons for over twenty years and with what sweet interest she listened to all my wild schemes and with a maternal sympathy, born of an understanding that passes the knowledge of man, she soothed my ruffled brow, assuaged my uncontrollable grief, and instinctively pointed out to me the line of least resistance.

But her fortitude grew to maturity in the long agony of my unrelievable affliction. Probably no woman aside from conditions of war ever bore more irksome burdens or faced more serious responsibilities so suddenly thrust upon her. The bolt that felled me shattered me so utterly that all who cared for me were stunned. My family and loved ones reeled under the blast. The problem of living was acute, the matter of bread, medicine, and nursing loomed menacingly large. I became such a care as in all probability never for so long taxed the strength, challenged the love, and wore upon the patience of mortal woman. My wife so completely lost herself in the exacting absorptions and huge demands of her helpless family and suffering husband, that her course seemed the simple line of duty rather than the heroic immolation that it was. With such quiet assurance, marked efficiency, and resigned dignity did she follow the thorny path of her appointed task that only the discerning immediately understood the marvels of her excellence and the wonder of her love. Without the faintest show of reticence she accepted the decree of her hard sentence and proceeded to serve her long term with a song.

In addition to care of me which was constant day and night, she had in the house a young family and my crippled mother. She was called to my bedside from one to twenty times each night. She took a correspondence course from the University in Home Economics and became an expert and scientific cook and an acceptable teacher. She made bread, the very odor of which would make one ravenously hungry. This she sold at a fancy price. She had classes in household economics, composed of the leading women of the city. Between demonstration and lecture she would rush to my room to relieve my distresses. She carried on a magazine subscription business that covered the city and reached to three states. She became an irresistible literary solicitor both by person and by mail. How

she found the time to do all of these things, none will ever know.

Then the first spring that we lived in the old rented house whose friendly shelter was the best we could obtain, the days were unspeakably calamitous. One boy fractured his arm, the baby had an almost fatal attack of pneumonia, the second son was operated on for appendicitis, and my wife's dear mother died. These adversities pounded on her heart like the blows of a trip hammer, but they neither made her afraid nor dismayed. I continued to live, but grew daily a heavier burden and a more dependent charge. There was not one thing I could do for myself; physically I was a lump of helpless clay. Macaulay says, speaking of the death of Warren Hastings, that the great British Proconsul at a ripe old age sank into his grave with no degrading symptoms manifesting themselves in the malady that bore him away. Not so of me. She of whom I write has had to perform the most revolting service and endlessly return to the most repulsive duties, and in it all she had the wit to humor my whims. She has assisted me in imaginary business enterprises. She has stinted to buy stamps that I might carry on a correspondence that pleased me and made me think I was doing something.

Had it not been that she was a strong woman, both of us had long since been in our graves. The grief of my heart is that her shoulders are bent from the leaden load she has carried so long and her white hands once so beautifully patrician are reddened and distorted by the cruel penalty of a sort of toil that it seems no woman should ever be called upon to endure. And in the cave of my physical horrors with every mental hallucination aiding and abetting the writhing agonies of a tortured body, she brought a sweetness and a light that made it possible for me to bear, to live, to think, and to work.

Considerate treatment of me was the supremest test to which mortal could be put. Mine is the disease of the nerves. There is not a nerve in me that does not tingle with pain or flare with flame. This causes an irascibility that will make an enraged hyena's screams sound impotently harmless. Always an irritable man and unreasonably oppressive to those I loved, my illness has accentuated my irritability often to the point of desperation. But in all my provoking outbursts of temper in

only the rarest of instances has there been a reply in kind from the wonder woman.

For two years my wife has been the superintendent of the dining hall of the College of Marshall, where by long hours of unmitigated and stressful toil and by an amiable demeanor beyond praise she has earned for us all our food and shelter. For over a half year she has not even been to church, so compelling are the calls of home and her position of public trust. If modestly meeting the urgency of a great situation will insure a crown to any woman, then the stars are already being fashioned that will blaze in the diadem that shall encircle the brow of my wife. She rose to the occasion and a great destiny is hers. And so with the quenchless love of a dying man, I pay this all too unworthy homage to the wonder woman, my wife.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CHILDREN OF THE MANSE

Since an autobiography is expected to be a family homily and an exemplification of unblushing egotism I insert this chapter. I can write about my own children with due restraint because I have been their severest critic. I certainly can never be accused of too great leniency toward the weaknesses, failures, and sins of those of my own household. I had high aims for my children and I drove them like Jehu. I made the mistake of finding more faults with them than I did with all the other children of the parish. But with the older ones the strenuous discipline of the early day has already borne favorable fruit. If only the good die young, our children are all predestined to unparalleled longevity. Every one of them had the temper of his father and all the dangerous Adamic propensities. When my oldest boy was a little fellow I had to hurry to Sunday school to keep the young irrepressible from systematically fighting his way down the church aisle. That kid was some scrapper in his day. He fought thru his residence in two towns and then his belligerent reputation aided him in bluffing his way thru all other places.

My children were a surprise to me. This is trite to all experienced parents, but it was as new to me when I made the discovery as if I had been the first father to whom the revelation had ever been vouchsafed. The repressive atmosphere of the parsonage only made the lid soar higher when it did go off. I have seen outcropping in my children nearly every sin I ever committed and even the evil desires that I have successfully repressed. I should like to write an elaborate treatise on the pathos of parenthood.

Our children were all large, fine looking, and evidently quite healthful at birth, but accidents, illness, and diseases to which all flesh is heir have been from the beginning our bitter portion. The oldest and the youngest boys survived painfully baffling

physical ailments and their sufferings almost slew us. I can never forget the piercingly unconscious wails of my eldest son as he was coming out from under the anesthetic after an operation. Surely the grass will never grow on the ground where I walked while the surgeons were busy with their instruments of pain; and Halley's Comet was to me a familiar trail of fire in the eastern sky, for I saw it every morning for two weeks, because at that time I was bearing in my arms the livelong night the emaciated form of my scarcely recognizable baby boy.

The comicalities of babyhood were an endless source of merriment. When the mumps invaded our home and found none of us immune, my oldest boy, who was the first to take it, came down stairs one morning with his face swollen as from the sting of bees and said: "Daddy, I had so big night, my jaws hurted me all night long." But I must make this chapter brief and as conveniently modest as one of my disposition can. William Thomas Tardy, Jr., is now a First Lieutenant in the 373rd Infantry, San Juan, Porto Rico. He attended the Louisiana Industrial Institute and Baylor University. He has taught school in three places, the last in the West Indies. He is inclined to be a linguist and is enamored of Latin America, and has been a journalist on newspapers in both Havana and San Juan. He graduated in the first officers' training camp at Porto Rico, received his commission, and became an instructor in the two following training camps. He assisted in training the Porto Rican Army for duty overseas and this contingent was to sail for France about the time the armistice was signed. He then became Intelligence Officer of the Island and a member of the Headquarters Staff, and he is yet furiously indignant because the Huns by their untimely collapse kept him from the Continent and, as he says, made it necessary for him to use spurs to hold his feet on his desk.

James Noel Tardy is a Second Lieutenant in the Porto Rican Army, 373rd Infantry. He is our second son. His middle name comes from his mother's grandfather, who was Captain Noel of Kentucky, and who was killed in the fierce fighting around Franklin, Tennessee. So proud are all of the girls of the family into which I married of their mother's gallant father, that already four of them have a child named Noel. James is a curly haired, browneyed, handsome rascal. Those

who know say that he got his eyes from Mrs. Noel, his maternal great grandmother. So freakish is heredity that emphatic characteristics remain quiescent for years and then break out again in the third and fourth generation. There follow around our fireside Joseph, in the age of indecision and fast running up Dr. Gambrell's famous hill; the one girl of the house, Margaret, comes next. Then there is round-faced Francis, the fat image of his father, and a character. He hates soap, abominates bath water, devours books, and loves all the great outdoors. And little Harold makes our family complete. There is nothing remarkable about these children except that they are mine. The only justification I have for writing about them at all is that I thought those who loved me would like to know something of those whom I loved, and may I not, in closing this chapter that I have written with fear and trembling, plead with those who read these lines to pray for the children whom I may so soon leave?

CHAPTER XIX

THE TRAGEDY OF A STRICKEN MAN

The bolt was long poised with unerring precision, but I did not believe it would ever come, and when the blow did strike, it was with dreadful abruptness. An upstanding man believes every man mortal but himself. He cannot conceive that to him the summons shall come, and the more absorbed he is in the pressingly important duties that use and distract him, the more unthinkable that physical activity should cease. So self-centered are we all and so lost are the mightiest of men in the labors of their little day and so circumscribed are the loftiest of souls in the small orb where their energies are to find an outlet for a brief time. I had had every warning that a smitten creature should need, but the voice of direful disease and premonitory pains did not carry to my consciousness the serious meaning of its tremendous import. For years my pallor had deepened, my energies had slackened, and my nerves had flared and slithered. Everything that devoted churches in Louisiana could do for me had been done. Summer vacations were voted me and my expenses were paid, but still the shadows deepened.

Always had I been a highly strung individual. For twenty years I had lived on edge. I never knew the art of relaxation, my nerves were forever taut. Even my pleasures were bodily-consuming pastimes. I consumed more nerve force in leading the Sunday morning prayer at church than Russel Sage expended in making a hundred thousand dollars. Being of French descent, my normal state was one of dissipation. For fifteen or twenty years I averaged more than a sermon or address a day, probably four hundred a year—these in addition to all the other things I tried to do. I read books until eleven o'clock or midnight and then went on a round of calls on the critically ill, and later came back still too distraught for sleep, and read again until breakfast. In some of the cities of my pastorates there is not a block I have not been on every hour of the night and day. The woes of my people were my

own woes and the iron of a world's death agony entered my soul. Ever have I staggered under the load of a shuddering globe. My sympathy for others devitalized my being. The red in my blood was burned up and the fluid that coursed in my veins was half water. Inveterate smoking and constant drinking of Louisiana black coffee without doubt made their contribution to my physical demolition. These ancillaries of a too busy life all conspired for my bodily overthrow. The final crisis crept upon me with stealthy and remorseless tread. My paling face and bending form pathetically haunted the resorts of the land. From Marlin to Washington and Hot Springs to Chicago mark a portion of the paths of my itinerary. Women on the Pullmans marveled at my colorless face and sympathetic men came to my assistance as they noted my tottering steps. My wife cared for me at Hot Springs and for a month at Chicago, where we last sought relief by visitation to the high authorities in the kingdom of modern medicine. Here my wife balanced my wavering body in hotel corridors and trundled me in a roller chair to the office of a physician at the hospital for treatment. So self-deceived may one become about his own condition, that I thought I was improving when the great doctors were convinced that I was dying. I was under the care of the famous Dr. John B. Murphy and his staff of eminent specialists. The diagnosis was that I had lateral sclerosis (hardening of the lateral nerves), and I was fatefully near to pernicious anaemia. Though the head of a great Catholic Institution, Dr. Murphy did everything possible for me and placed at my disposal the abilities and services of his incomparable assistants, all free of charge. In fact the only doctor's bill I have paid since my affliction was to a Baptist doctor at a hotel in Chicago. But the authorities in Dr. Murphy's office after a month dubiously shook their heads and advised my wife to bring me home on the earliest possible train for Texas. That was tantamount to a death sentence from experts. It took my breath and unnerved me. I sent for Dr. Johnston Myers, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church. His presence comforted me and his prayer of faith dammed up life's outflowing stream. The trip home was a fearsome experience and one long suspense. My wife and the porter nursed me all the way from Chicago to Saint Louis in the Pullman. Hot milk and strychnin kept a

spark of life in me. Any moment that I should have ceased to strive, I should have died. I fought harder for life than ever did the French to keep the Germans out of Paris. The desire for life within me was never so strong, the demands upon me were never so many, the prospects of usefulness never so bright, and the human reasons for living never so unanswerable. At Saint Louis we were met by President T. C. Gardener of the College of Marshall. He had been sent by friends to take command in case of the dread eventuality.

Even when my life hung by a thread, I still possessed a saving sense of the ridiculous. As I was being borne on a stretcher thru the great waitingroom at St. Louis to the Texas train, the crowds thru which we passed were smitten with amazement and sorrow at my forlorn estate. Some braver than the rest peered under the brim of my large Stetson hat which was over my face. They were evidently determined to see if I were alive. To prove my vitality I mischievously and maliciously winked at them, one and all. Yes, dear reader, I actually winked and sent the observers back to their seats, surprised but greatly relieved.

The arrival home was unqualifiedly premonitory. A score of friends met the train to receive the sinking pastor. A reporter came to the stateroom door, looked in upon me, and wrote of my precarious condition. The parsonage was filled with anxious and self-invited guests. Only three of our children and my mother were at home. The other children were scattered from Havana, Cuba, to Bryan, Texas. Prayer was made that I might live until they could gather around my bedside. Great love was shown me by all classes and conditions and every rank and every sex and every race of the entire community. One by one the children all came safely home and though my death was constantly imminent, it was not immediate. The marvel deepened and I did not die.

Then the inevitable happened. I saw into the mysteries of the psychology of a people's grief. Folks like for their public men to get well or die quickly. Long sustained grief is impossible to the multitude and continuous interest of the masses in the case of one person is unthinkable. Some had made up their minds to have a great ecclesiastical funeral and they seemed to be piqued because I was so inconsiderate of their lugubrious

whims as not to die. To this day they act as if they had been cheated out of something to which they had an unquestioned right. Disappointed expectancy wrought badly in their feelings toward me. To be denied the relief of an outburst of grief was to many oppressively stifling and they resented it. Even my little boy Francis, while sprawling on a lounge and eating in my room, said: "Daddy, I bet if you die, you'll have a big funeral, for people on the train and everywhere are asking about you."

In the fall when the matter of my longevity was still problematical, it became necessary for me to be removed from the parsonage to give place to a successor who was able to preach. The church had been seized with a panic for its own safety and it was obsessed with the one thought of its own preservation. When my salary as pastor stopped, there was not a dollar in the treasury of any Baptist organization in Marshall, in Texas, in the South, or in the whole round world for a preacher in my condition. That has been the tragedy of being a Baptist preacher. I rejoice that the stigma is in process of removal and I am entertaining the comforting assurance that no other stricken minister shall ever pass through my Gethsemane of woe.

On a bleak day of rain and mud in early November, in a borrowed ambulance I was carried from the parsonage to an unsightly old rented house, the only outside persons who aided in the transfer of my wrecked body were the ambulance driver and President C. H. Maxon of Bishop College, who with my second son looked after me on the inside. Our oldest son was in college and the next boy was a senior in the high school. Both could not have earned money enough to pay house rent and the upkeep of our dwelling. The world will never know how truly desperate was our plight. The financial outlook was the gloomiest in all our checkered career. We were even wanting in some of the costliest and most necessary furnishings of a home. The shades to the windows and the gas kitchen range belonged to the parsonage. Every dollar we had ever possessed was gone, our credit was exhausted, and our prospects were as dark as an engulfing storm-cloud. Had it not been for the business-like intervention of a group of worldly and non-Baptist friends, I do not yet see how we should have escaped starvation. Mr. H. M. Price, a prominent Methodist and a journalist,

wrote two articles in his daily paper about me, and in answer my friends in the city gave me a never-to-be-forgotten pounding. One rich Jew presented us with a gas cooking-stove; another Jewish merchant carpeted the dining-room; window shades came from other sources; and food of great variety and abundance was generously put into our pantry; and, upon the initiative of Mr. Frank Davis, banker and capitalist, a number of men covenanted together to put approximately a hundred dollars a month in the bank for my wife. This arrangement was expected to go on about a year and it did. In that length of time it was reasonable to believe that I should be either well or dead. This unprecedented liberality by friends outside of my former parish, while praiseworthy beyond the power of words to describe, is not surprising when it is remembered that my congregations were a cosmopolitan crowd, and that the City of Marshall regarded me as the founder and promoter of one of its most substantial and promising enterprises. To this day these same will do anything for me in their power.

I lay prone upon my bed for one year. In all those months of suspense and anguish I was not dressed and I never had street clothes on until friends garbed me and held me in position on the back seat of a large automobile that I might make a brief and weak address at the breaking of dirt for the main building of the College of Marshall. I spoke twelve minutes and was carried home exhausted and limp. So tender was my flesh that the sun blistered my hands. But the hardy adventure gave me courage and inspired hope. And after that day in July, with growing frequency I was dressed and pushed down town in a roller chair. In November I made an address to the State Convention of Negro Baptists in the chapel of Bishop College. I had a tumultuous welcome and my words a hilarious reception. That afternoon a committee of stalwart colored men called at my room and presented me a bag containing twenty-five silver dollars, which they averred was in appreciation of my speech and in token of the love of the race for me. This is the very first money that I had made since the beginning of my bedridden condition, and I shall never cease to be grateful to my brethren in black. This is the story of how I was stricken and smitten and wounded. Other things are yet to be said and more tales are to be told.

CHAPTER XX

MY SOUL TORN BY THE GREAT WAR

The assassination of the Austrian Archduke brought to mobilization Germany's fifty years of half stealthy assault upon the civilization of the ages. Under duress Austria was forced to exhume the bullet-pierced body of the heir to the throne and make the corpse a cause for war. The German thrust through Belgium was so irresistible, the long line of men in dusty grey so numberless, the pillaging so planned, the brutality so shockingly barbarous, the destruction so complete, and the rape of France so fiendishly systematic, and the whole army movement so thorough, and all on a scale of such stupendous magnitude, as to abash thought and wound imagination.

I was at the lowest physical depths when the battle flare blazed over Europe. I was compelled to lie still and suffer, as half the planet was made one vast shambles. I closed my eyes and saw Belgium destroyed and France devastated. I saw the ash piles where proud universities had stood and the battered arches of cathedrals that had been the glory of the centuries. I saw chateaus of the rich and the noble pounded into dust. I heard the screams of unprotected women and children on the coast of England and even in the heart of London as they scurried to cellars to escape the deadly bombs from cloud-riding zeppelins. The lurid flames of burning ships in channel and mid-ocean grew red on my sight as the submerged assassins of the sea did the bidding of their Hohenzollern masters. Cotton in the states went down to six cents and the German even destroyed industry, commerce, and the livelihood of millions in neutral and pacific America. The children cried in vain for toys and the aged and sick perished for want of delicacies and medicines. And the irksome restriction of all was that we were non-combatants, suffering the calamitous consequences of a war in which we could have no active participation. Our commerce was driven from the sea by the pirates of the deep. Our flag was insulted, our property was destroyed, and our

government was humbled in the person of its innocent interned citizens. Men who could read the letters of fire on the sky knew that America must some day be drawn in, but the Lusitania went down with its invaluable cargo of precious human freight and still we did not fight. Were the truth known, we could not fight, since at that time our country was over eighty per cent pacifist and German influences were dominant in more realms than we knew; but at last when Paris was almost captured, when England was exhausted and Italy was bleeding from a terrible beating, and Russia was disintegrating and changing front, patient America armed and quietly announced that she was going to see it through.

There is no tongue that can tell the tale of this war's havoc. It is unquestionably the most sordid and sodden record of carnage in the annals of time. America came in with a swing, a preparation quick and vast, a purpose high, and with a soul white and clean; but it was war she entered and the awful war of the Hun's own making. It was suffocating death from gas, shell-hole graves, incineration in the air, or desperate drowning in the icy seas. The parting with our boys was a wrench unspeakable. We were a land people and going to fight overseas was a new and stupefying experience.

Then, too, the world was starving, and is yet. Forty millions of men were engaged in destruction. When peace is finally established, America will have to send Jersey cattle to the Isle of Jersey, and Holstein to Holland. Then plagues always come in the wake of war. In Australia and New Zealand the sheep died by the millions, and in Argentina the beef-cattle perished on the pampas. In Texas the droughts claimed a fearful toll of livestock and the unprecedented severity of the following winter froze what the heat had not consumed. Then our boys died by the thousands of pneumonia in the camps and later the influenza came to claim a million victims. But our country heroically paid the price and arrived at the front in time to save from destruction a quivering world. We were not in the battle's zone long, but we were there numerously and mightily. In all we have contributed a quarter million lives to stem the tide of Teutonic ferocity and to insure for democracy an open road.

I do not share the opinion of many publicists and theolo-

gians that this war will usher in the reign of righteousness. The problem of sin will remain when the last gun is fired. Neither do I think when our boys come home that they will all be transparent saints. Many of them will doubtless be changed for the better. Many more will be hospitable toward gospel truth, while some may be embittered and hardened. Neither do I think reconstruction and readjustment and rehabilitation will be accomplished with ease and celerity. For us all the rough road will be the route to the goal of peace and plenty again. I am not so sure about the speedy coming of a great revival of religion, but I am prayerful and hopeful. And there are not unpropitious signs in the moral skies.

But let no man deceive himself. The mature men and women of this age will never be the same again. All are changed. In the welter of blood and hell of battle it could not be otherwise. Every serious and thoughtful person on the globe will be permanently saddened and millions of little children will not live long enough to get out from under the shadow of the great war. Privates are coming home seasoned, sedate, disillusioned, transformed. Chaplains and ministers have aged almost beyond recognition within a few months. Great generals have utterly broken and retired to give place to younger men. Nurses who went in young have come out old. All has tragically changed. I doubt very gravely if the present generation can ever again be hilarious or possessed with the noble rage of living. It shall be ours to rebuild the altar fires and glimpse the glory and sense the serenity of Him who said, "Behold, I make all things new."

The one emerging lesson of supremest moment is that men from this world debacle shall learn the high values of the purely spiritual. Materialism has proved its impotency and may not the world come into its own in the realm of the unseen? Money-madness, pleasure-chasing, debauches of the most daring sensual violence, were debasing and damning us all. Let us believe that the perdition of war with all its dread accompaniments shall save us from the slime pits of sin and the bottomless gulf of moral turpitude into which we were slipping. And shall we not pray the God of all grace for an era of healing for the world and reconciliation for the torn souls whose blood is the sign of their agony?

CHAPTER XXI

LECTURING FROM A ROLLER CHAIR

After being shut in a year and a half there was marked improvement in the muscular strength of my body. I was out in my chair nearly every day and I soon began to take out-of-town trips by automobile. It was a joy beyond expression when I found that I could speak from a rocking-chair in any auditorium. This I did a few times at least with great gratification to myself. Then I got business in my brain and established a little real estate office down town where I went daily for four or five months, and when spring and summer came I canvassed the county in a petty political campaign and went in a new Ford to every portion of the county. My campaign was intense, but the results were disastrous, for I was not elected. At this time I could drag around the room on crutches, but my leaden feet and twisted back and sleepless nights did not allow this temporary improvement to deceive me. I was actually called to two churches, to a village church for half time and to a country church for one-fourth time, and I preached for a year. My conveyance was a Studebaker roadster more than half paid for by my brother.

In the fall of our entrance into the war and when I saw I could no longer be a peripatetic preacher, I accidentally evolved some war lectures. My old church at Ruston was to dedicate the building and I was to speak on the high day of dedication when the house was consecrated to God and the notes of indebtedness were burned. The trip was a fearsome one, since I had not been away from home at night for over three years and I was very cowardly concerning the outcome of the adventure. My wife went along as nurse and a football giant went to carry me in his arms and to roll me in my chair. This trip was so successful financially and socially and religiously that others were soon planned. And that is how it came about that from my wicker chair, given me by friends in Mansfield, Loui-

siana, I spoke to audiences all over Texas and Louisiana and a part of Arkansas. I even had return calls to many important places. My itinerary was oppressively hard even for a well man, and eight months of it was enough to destroy what strength I had accumulated during my bedridden days. I traveled from Sherman to Houston and from McKinney to Orange, from Longview to Beaumont and from Temple to Texarkana and Tyler too. I went from Lakes Charles to Monroe, Louisiana. I spoke to capacity houses and my remuneration was surprisingly large. Everywhere I met friends of former years and always I was greeted by converts of my ministry in other places. These were dear reunions and glorious trophies of the wonderful gospel even when poorly preached by me. My travels were one triumphal procession. I was conquering despite the most serious physical limitations that could be suffered by mortal man, and I was having poured upon me the devoted love of those whom I thought had forgotten me. I went to all my ex-pastorates in Louisiana and Texas but two; and oh, such welcome and such tender love as were mine! The good pastors of the land did me wonderful service and bestowed upon me high honors. They threw wide the doors of their churches to me and then pried open the purses of their parishoners for me.

Never was a decrepit pilgrim so caressed and so served by the choicest characters and sweetest souls of the earth as I was. Pastors put themselves out for my convenience and comfort and exerted every intelligent effort to give me a great hearing at every point. The Lord will reward these earnest and pious men for their unselfish and whole-hearted devotion to my needs. What a princely retinue of pastors follow in the train of Jesus Christ! How high their calling, how glorious their mission, how sweet their sacrifices, and how assuredly wonderful their destiny! From Dallas to Carthage the preachers gave way for me. It was worth all the pain to enjoy the fellowship of the saints and to feel that my messages were indeed a source of inspiration to fathers and mothers who had sent their sons overseas to die. And it was no little consolation to be told that I was making some worthy contribution to America's part in the great war.

But I pressed too eagerly forward. The second Sunday in

June I had a veritable field day at Tyler. Then I came home and was forced off the platform until the second Sunday in July, when I went to Bryan and came near never getting home alive. Since that date I have not been out of town. My roller chair is vacant and lonely as the wind whips it up and down on the front porch. It is more than probable that I shall never speak from its friendly embrace again. It is reasonably sure that I have delivered my last lecture. More than a year and a half ago I received a love letter from Bishop H. C. Morrison of the Methodist Church, South, in which he said, "I have held my last conference and shall ask soon to be retired. And it will not be long until I shall try the realities of another world, but my brother, we shall meet again." So it is as my dear roller chair rumbles up and down the porch. It may be getting ready to bear me away where chairs will not be needed. But surely if I am so fortunate as by the blood of the Crucified One to enter the realms of bliss eternal, the Master will some day let me speak upon heaven's high themes with unfaltering tongue and unclouded brain.

CHAPTER XXII

THE HOPE THAT IS WITHIN ME

One of the most heartbreaking and despairing stabs that drives its ruthless blades into mature consciousness, is the realization that so soon as a man has sense enough to live he is either old enough or sick enough to die. But this is the philosophy of life and the penalty of sin. There is no remedy for it. There is the mystery of affliction. Occasionally there are wise ones who think they have parted the veil and entered the council chambers of eternal wisdom, but they deceive none but themselves. My long night of pain is a baffling problem as nonunderstandable as the book of Job. There have been blessings innumerable upon my heart and head and in my home, since my brow and frame were blasted. I have had a revelation of the wealth of the love of the living saints. In every conceivable way has this affection been shown. It has come in checks from Richmond to Dallas. Words of appreciation for my writings and for sermons of former years, and then just plain love letters from those who could do nothing but love. The mighty in the earth and the great in the Lord have been visitors at my bedside in my humble home, and probably the most blessed thing that has come to my own heart is that I have been forced to think and I have had time to love. The response in me has been eager and full and joyous has been the experience. Then I have been compelled to contemplate the change awesome and inevitable that must come to us all, but especially soon to me who have been so long time the prisoner of Jesus Christ. It is usually not an entirely safe thing for an individual to speak of his innermost exercises and soul emotions. No man knows his own heart and how can he sound its depths so that others will understand? But there are some foundations and truths immovable and steadfast and there are experiences that shall not pass away. The word of the Lord remaineth sure and his judgments and righteousness altogether. My creed is

very brief and my theological system is as transparent as the New Testament. The atonement of Jesus Christ was my theme when I preached and his unmerited grace is my hope now, my ground for a favorable issue at judgment, and the basis of my anticipation of entering into the joy of my Lord. In my own name I have not a single claim on divine favor. Of myself I am utterly lost and undone.

"In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

"Nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness can avail for me."

The sky line is not always clear, neither has the vision always been cloudless. I have had to fight for my faith ever as I have fought for my life. Not an hour for five years have I been in bodily ease and my disease was such as to make terrible inroads upon mind and soul. But the story of my sufferings can never be told and ought never be told. In weakness beyond conception and pain all but unbearable I am dictating this last chapter of my little book. I am pressing to my own heart the precious truths I have preached so often to others, and while I have no spiritual exhilaration and no buoyant, bounding soul throbs, I am resting in Him who carries the lambs in His bosom and whose Father willeth that not one of these little ones should perish. "Rock of Ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee." "In the Cross of Christ I glory, towering o'er the wrecks of time, gathering harvests rich and golden, sown in poverty and tears." And in the faith that I shall gather round the throne and see the King some day, I lay my twisted hand in His pierced palm and lay my tired head on His love-torn heart.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE AUTHOR'S DEATH

[On the very day that the manuscript of this book was mailed to the printer the author died. After he had gone I wrote to his bereaved wife and asked her to write a closing chapter, thus giving an account of his closing hours. This she has done in the words that follow.—J. B. C.]

On February 24, 1919, about three weeks after the last words of this little book were dictated, the author fell asleep. He had fought a good fight. The Apostle Paul could not have had a harder nor a longer battle than his. For five long years this man of colossal energy had been a helpless invalid. For a year and a half, after all medical skill had been exhausted, even by the world renowned Doctor Murphy, of Chicago, he lay upon his bed unable so much as to hold a piece of bread in his hand. During this time, with the aid of a stenographer, he wrote constantly, producing some of his best articles. Then his health improved and he accepted the pastorates of two churches—one in a little town near by and the other in the country. After serving these for awhile he found that by having a strong Negro man to lift him, he could go from city to city and this he did, delivering his war lectures to great crowds.

In June, 1918, however, he again became too feeble to be carried away from home. On Friday before Christmas his trouble became more acute and his suffering more intense, and from that time until the end he was able to sit up during only a small portion of each day. Surely the three younger children will never forget how on Christmas Eve he sat in the shadow of their gaily decorated tree and told them again the Christmas story, adding that before another Christmas he would leave them, and then in a most beautiful prayer he commended each of them to the keeping of Him whom he had so faithfully served.

After Christmas he began what might be called a race

with Death. Long had he planned to write his Autobiography that he might inspire others to bravely battle against great odds and at the same time leave a source of income for his wife and little children. Some days he would be too weak to dictate more than a few paragraphs. Again he could write a chapter or more a day. But always with the question: "Shall I live to finish it?" So great was his belief in prayer that he sent out appeals to friends and churches who were very dear to him asking them to pray that he might be spared to finish the work on which he had so set his heart. At last the book was completed and when he knew it was in the hands of the publishers he said, "It is finished. I have lived to see my dream, the College of Marshall, come true; I have seen the close of the greatest of wars; my two lieutenant boys have come home; my little book is done—why should I pray to live longer in this tortured and twisted old body that cries for rest?" Often would he quote from Kipling's "L'Envoi":

"We shall rest for an æon or two and, faith! we shall need it."

The second week in February he enjoyed a six days' visit from his Lieutenant-Commander brother, who he had not seen for five years. Then he seemed to grow more and more feeble and on a calm, bright day a little after noon he quietly went to sleep in the Master's arms to wake on the farther shore.

Colonel Roosevelt's death a few weeks before had made a marked impression on him. It was such a marvel to him that that tumultuous soul should pass out so quietly. He had often spoken also of how Cromwell's death had seemed more fitting when an awful storm raged around his palace that night. But this equally tumultuous and storm-tossed soul slipped away even more quietly. As he had wished, there was no moaning of the bar when he put out to sea.

The next morning a most beautiful service was held over his casket in the handsome auditorium of the College for which he had practically given his life. Among those who gathered to pay their last tribute of respect were a number of his colored friends whom he had loved and to whom he had often brought messages of cheer.

That afternoon loving hands laid him to rest in beautiful Greenwood Cemetery, at Longview, beneath a wealth of flowers. Surely he has seen his "Pilot face to face" since he "has crossed the bar."